

No. 245

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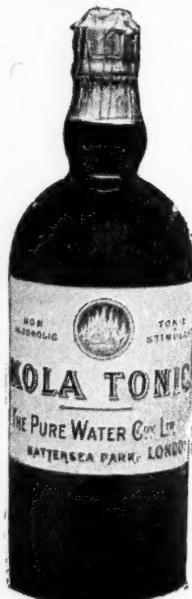
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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER 1916.

FLY LEAVES; OR TALES OF A FLYING PATROL.
B.E.F. 1915.

EXTRACTS FROM A PILOT'S LOG AND LETTERS HOME.

We are over the Channel at last and steering by compass for France and the War; clouds looking lovely in the sun and the engine working nicely. Incidentally we are supposed to be looking for submarines. Nothing doing. Duller than usual in fact. Wish I hadn't said that! Of course it made the beastly engine miss. Am looking about wildly for something that will float, in case it gives up entirely and we fall into the sea. However, much tap-twiddling induced the wretched thing to resume its purr, although you would probably think that the purr was more like a chorus of very angry dogs barking. There's a ship 'tramping' about a mile below me, making a horrid smoke. I wonder if they paid for best Welsh. I wish you were here with me, you'd love it. The 'Tramp' looks dirty and dangerous and would probably make me very ill.

We have just landed at R.F.C. headquarters and have had a much better tea than we have ever had time for in the strenuous old days in England. I thought you might be amused by my writing a letter to you in the air. The writing was wobblier than usual when we struck the gusts and the down-draughts from the clouds. I wonder what has happened to Phil. We started together, but his machine was left a long way astern and was lost sight of about half-way over. I hope he isn't in the ditch. . . . Our Channel crossing took just 16 minutes—rather an improvement on the time of the Leave steamer.

Glad to say Phil is all right; he came down near the coast with a broken valve, so I went over and fixed it up with him and we flew back peacefully together. . . .

Many thanks for your letter and the cake, especially the cake.
VOL. XLI.—NO. 245, N.S.

It has been raining lately, so we have not had much flying. No Hun machines out at all, so we have been drawing all the usual coverts blank, and have got cold for nothing. One Boche had a narrow shave the other day ; one of our crowd, who rejoices in the name of Mad Jack, saw him coming over and promptly hid in a cloud. Fritz sauntered along in an old L.V.G. biplane, looking on the floor, and directly he had passed, Mad Jack dived, and opened fire at the grand new yellow scarf Fritz was wearing round his neck, much to his surprise and annoyance. Having his new scarf punctured was more than brother Boche could stand, so off he legged it, heaving out maps and goggles, a few bullets from his Mausers, some smoke and much bad language. Unfortunately our gun jambed, with the oil frozen nearly solid. The two airmen weren't exactly hot either. Rotten luck, wasn't it ?

Next day, Uncle Carl in his Albatross comes over our shanties, drops a few bombs on a hop garden near by and clears off before we could get near him. Quite convenient on the whole, as our Intelligence Officer soon discovered that murdered hops make good soup and good salad. By the way, Uncle Carl's last bomb was a dummy, with a note addressed to us wishing 'a happy Easter and better luck to the English aviators who have driven us from the air.' Rather nice and sarcastic, wasn't it ? We all howled with laughter and framed the note, together with the copy of an official document which is usually known as 'Comic Cuts.'

Everyone well and cheery. Billets very fair, but we can't get baths.

Yesterday was Easter Day and I managed to work in an early chapel (which was rigged up in the local château), and also an ordinary Church parade later on. We had a full-blown Padre, and the Services were very welcome and well attended. Sleepy now, so farewell. By the way, the last cake wasn't so big as the previous one. Gott strafe War Economy.

The Huns aren't scrapping much, so yesterday three of us went on duty in three machines to a jolly little seaside watering place, where they were supposed to grow submarines. We only found bathing machines, and some quite pretty French girls who talked

some quaint language. However, one of us managed to find out what it was all about, and we discovered we were asked to an enormous dinner party given in our honour at the local château. The brother of one of the ladies I had met last year at Olympia, when he was riding his show horses. It was a regular West Country dinner, as several of us had hunted regularly with the Devon and Somerset in happier days, and the rest had been to the Cathedral at Exeter. We had a gorgeous time and, leaving our machines there according to orders, came back in a car driven by the Fortescues' late chauffeur, now a full-blown private. Funny little world, isn't it ?

(Interval for refreshments and also to tune our Wireless.)

A very quaint thing happened here the other day. A pilot was coming down in his Martinsyde Scout to land after a very strenuous time aloft. A man was on the floor lighting an experimental smoke-bomb by a fuse. Neither saw the other and they very nearly met. Bang went the smoke-bomb just at the moment of landing. The pilot thought he had been hit by a shell, or that his machine had suddenly blown up, and couldn't for the life of him remember what the drill book said was the correct attitude to maintain when this sort of thing happened. The floor man fell down flat on his face, frightened out of his life, and yelled out that he had been knocked down and was rapidly expiring. Lots of us saw the whole show a hundred yards off and howled with laughter. The Court found both prisoners guilty of attempted death by misadventure, and fined them each one drink all round. That'll learn 'em !

Lots of work in the air, and more on the ground with repairs, motor transport and so on. German Archie (the nickname for Anti-Aircraft Artillery) has been pretty busy, but luckily not very effective. The fellows on the ground say the sight is lovely and most artistic, as the little white puffs burst round the machine every few seconds. These aren't my views ; if they are out for artistic effect I wish they would do it elsewhere.

Going to bed now, as we have to be up early for a combined

Boche hunt—that is, if we can find any, but game is very scarce and shy, especially at present. There is a feeling that perhaps they dislike being hunted. If we can't find any of their aeroplanes, we photograph their trenches and defences, with a little bombing by-play thrown in. This annoys them quite a lot.

(Next day.) We had been flying before breakfast. Beastly cold and very hungry, and we had drawn all the usual places blank. Brother Boche had too much sense to fly at an unearthly hour like that. We were getting rather bored with the whole show and annoyed with Archie's attentions, when we spotted a machine four miles to the S.E. and so left our own patrol to give chase. It was a long way off and almost certainly an English machine. (It nearly always is, as the Huns know the look of our destroyers and usually avoid them assiduously, clearing off on sight.) However, we gave chase, just for luck, feeling bored ; but as it got well over the German lines without getting Archied we got more interested. We had by then climbed to about 10,000 feet and had closed hardly at all, so we gave chase seriously, settling down to a steady 90 knots or more. After a few minutes we could see through glasses that she was a Hun Albatross biplane, going to their aerodrome, probably with information. She was doing about 60, so we gained, keeping above and behind her, where her pilot couldn't very well see us, and we soon closed to about 200 yards. Then we dived suddenly with a swoop, which was a fine feeling, rather what one imagines a hawk must feel like, speed about 120 or 130 knots, and then opened fire on her starboard quarter at a range of about 50 yards. She was hit by the first burst of rapid fire, and bits of fabric and wood and metal flaked off. She dived and twisted, and her observer opened at us with an automatic pistol at about 25 yards range. We were both heeled over on one wing, and both diving and banking at the same time. It must have looked rather jolly from the floor. The wind pressure was appalling and nearly lifted the gunner clean out of our machine. Fritz's observer's bullets whistled close past our heads, which was good shooting on his part, ripping up part of the plane above us in a few places, but luckily neither of us was hit. A few seconds later we knocked the pistol out of his arm, and their pilot was also hit and probably killed, as the Albatross sideslipped, fell vertically, and turned over on its back, our craft rushing over it and missing it by a very few feet. The defeated

German 'plane finally nose-dived the remaining two thousand feet or so, and smashed up completely on hitting the earth. We were still diving very fast indeed, and I succeeded in turning this into a slow spiral over the spot where the wrecked enemy lay, but we could see no movement at all, only a tangled mass of twisted wires, splintered wood, and torn fabric—all that remained of what a few minutes before had been a very fine specimen of engineering skill. We then straightened out our course and strolled home on a regular jack-snipe's plan of flying, to avoid the guns, machine guns and rifles, which the Boches turned on to us from the floor as soon as there was no chance of their hitting their own machine. They loosed off quite a jolly Morning Hate at us from the trenches too, but though we were holed over thirty times, they didn't do any damage that mattered. We got back to our lines and eased up to cool the engine, and then climbed up to 9500 feet to see if we could hunt another Hun. However, nothing doing, so we returned home just in time, for our petrol was getting low and our kind messmates had eaten half our breakfast, as we were the last in. Otherwise a satisfactory time, though I would rather kill lots of ordinary Huns than their flyers, who are better fellows on the whole than the rest ; but we can have no soft feelings now, after the Huns' brutal performances. When they catch us, if they catch us alive, we have no hope at all for our future comfort.

Very tiresome ; these fellows are the limit ! I was just off to have a nice hot bath, when a rotten Hun in an Aviatik amused himself by dropping bombs, so we had to go up and chase him, but he bolted too fast, and got too low over his machine guns on the floor, for us to have a chance of closing right up. However, we fired at him and frightened him horribly, judging by his behaviour, and probably hit him hard, though we didn't smash him entirely. I suddenly remembered it was tea-time and so we went back quick. The getting back past the guns is the worst part of it. Incidentally the observer saw some Hun movements, which he insisted on watching closely. I think he composed an essay or two as well, or perhaps it was a sonnet. The G.O.C. seemed very pleased with it, which was much more than I was, as we got Archied of course and hit in several places, early in the performance. Beastly nuisance getting back, as part of the propeller was broken off by a bit of shell, ditto the wings, and chunks were taken out of our woodwork. The

vibration was horrid and we expected it would smash up the machine before we got home. However, we were only sea-sick. We eventually landed by flares about dark. A tiresome day, as I wanted the bath and the opportunity of refilling the mess cellar. However, Jack did it all for me, and he says it was quite nice. I dislike Jack now!

Thanks very much for the papers. We get the *Times* and some others, twenty-four hours late, and also a daily official news, locally known as 'Comic Cuts' or 'Saucy Sidelights on Soldiers' Secrets.'

We were all much amused this morning by watching Jumbo photographing the Huns' lines in a gale of wind which blew all the Archies adrift, the only trouble being that Jumbo was so busy with his machine that he nearly forgot to come home, even when the photographer had used up all his plates.

The may is out in blossom and the whole country is nice and green, bar the mess which the fighting makes. Yesterday we went to the Asylum, where British officers get hot baths twice a week; and very welcome they are too. The Asylum has been made into a sort of Bath Club, and one meets one's pals there, other than the lunatics, to whom we owe a debt of gratitude for giving up washing *pro tem.*

Tom lent me a horse and I rode over to see his brother, who has been in the trenches some months now and was having a week's rest. But when I was there his crowd was suddenly warned for duty again, to put right a mistake on the part of some of our Allies, against whom the Huns had been using stinks,—a low game. Charlie was very fit and is the only surviving original officer of his company.

I have just been inoculated with the Tetanus stuff, as I got a finger busted up. Leastwise the Pill-man says that's why, but I think he is only being Frightful. I had two shell-hits in my wing yesterday, which cost H.M. Government about 2s. 3d. each to mend, but the Boches fired over £100 worth at us, so we are up on that deal. I think I'll go and worry the Adjutant and see if I can't get a little commission, or an invitation to dinner at the Headquarters mess.

Archie has got a new gun which is amusing him like a new toy. I hope he will never learn to use it properly, as it is a big one, and

the black smoke of its projectiles smells horrid, and is neither 'grateful nor comforting' like the cocoa you sent me. The Hun stink-gases are beastly things, but at present fairly useful. A dirty trick, but not a bad one if you have no morals. Sorry I can't give you any news, as we hear very little and are not allowed to talk of what we see for ourselves. Most of what we read in the papers, and about which we have any knowledge, is wrong, so we're all in the same boat.

Poor Jumbo has had bad luck. He was by way of going to pay Germany a visit, just to encourage them a bit with a bomb or two, but his beastly engine has just broken its heart, and his too, poor chap, though with any luck he will be able to go to-morrow; meanwhile he is not fit to talk to. A strenuous day for all of us working hard on the floor; rather like a hot day at home in September, when there are no partridges, but instead a great longing for drinks, with none available. We hope to get on the road, or rather in the air, again by to-morrow. One of our fellows nearly, oh! so nearly, got Fritz the other day. Both machines were badly hit by each other's bullets, the Hun legging it as hard as he could, with our little machine yapping away at its tail, when our gun stuck with a bad cartridge, and Fritz got away wounded but not knocked out. We all hate leaving game of any sort wounded 'out on the hill,' but we should have got Fritz if we had had a keeper and a good dog. Zeps are poor, shy, lonely creatures and also scarce, and I am afraid that the chance of a shot at these night bugs is very remote. In a way this is quite satisfactory, as it is part of our job to sweep the air clean and neat, and to prevent the Boches from flying over and getting information. We do this quite effectively without ever seeing a Zep or an aeroplane for several days together, as they daren't come near us in daylight, in the ordinary course of events. Zeps are a poor sort of practical joke in rather bad taste.

Two or three days ago we were suddenly sent for, just as we were beginning dinner, to chase Zeps, which were reported a long way to the North, going to England, as indeed they did. It was nearly dark and they would not let us go. Our flight was first on the ground out of the tents, and had loaded up and tested engines before orders came to stand by, which was pretty quick work. We were not allowed up, of course, without orders from the General or Colonel or somebody. However, we agreed to

sleep on the floor under our wings, in case we were allowed to start at dawn. Eventually we did get leave, and two of us went off within a minute and kept station. We went northwards to the sea towards N—— and then out to sea a few miles, to dodge the coastwise 'Archies,' which annoyed them. They fired a lot, but all short, as we guessed their range correctly and kept out of it. Then we altered course north-easterly, and went up the coast past O——. More annoyance to the Huns, who woke up slowly; but we couldn't see the Zeps. I expect the wind, which was very weak then, had let them get home before we could see them. Better luck next time. So we came back via the German lines, to look for a chance Hun early-birding.

We had a day off serious work this week, and went and dropped a jolly little assortment of comic bombs on some German massed troops, trains and transport behind their lines, about the time of their morning lager. Quite useful and very Frightful. We heard later that we had done much damage and had delayed a concentration considerably. They got very angry indeed and fired heaps of shells, several hundreds of pounds worth, and did no harm bar a few hits on our wings, which were mended in an hour or so by our mechanics, while we were having lunch. Rather a lark.

Here is a gap in the letter, during which I have had my hair cut by one of our chauffeurs. You'd laugh if you saw it now. It was done in a farmyard where we live and have our being, and was watched by a dirty crowd of kids of all sorts and sizes from two to fourteen years. They chanted a chorus during the performance of 'Cigarette and souvenir.' We couldn't even get rid of them when we turned the farmyard dog on to them. However, they were terrified when we threatened them with some pigs that we keep in the yard against the day when our rations do not arrive. Our farm is fairly close to the battle and we hear it all when an entertainment is in progress, though it never wakes us now. Well, after the hair was cropped, we had THE BATH—just like that—made out of canvas and bits of wood, the water being heated in petrol cans cut in half. Delicious !!

Suddenly, a frightful noise ! In the middle of having a wash,

the peaceful farmyard is invaded by a lot of steaming war-horses, and we dash down in time to welcome the headquarters and a squadron of the Blues. Very glad to see them; very nice too being among horses once more. They had just come back from the battle and were very hungry. We gave them dinner, to the great consternation of our limited staff and the good house-wife of the farm. For my sins I was responsible, as I was mess-president of our little flying crowd of six or seven, but, all the same, fifteen of us sat down to an enormous meal in half an hour. We had haggis, beef and onions, porridge and sardines, potatoes and almond icing and brandy cherries. The table for dinner grew rapidly out of a door and a few packing cases and tins, and light for the feast was provided by the head lamps of one of the motor transport cars. So now you see the advantage of this life is, that although all these officers, and 160 men besides, rolled up, the house was not overcrowded—we merely got more straw and ejected the rats, and the newcomers slept alongside of us. By the way, I found that the cavalry snore was much worse than the article supplied by the Flying Corps.

We all try to be as comfortable as we can, and are lucky in having an ex-tailor, who is now a corporal mechanic—promoted, I really believe, for his skill in sewing odd bits of sacking and cloth produced from nowhere at all, on to bits of broken under-carriages and so forth, and making them into armchairs and sofas that would not disgrace the Ritz.

The other day, when some of us were foraging in a town not very far from a quaint spot called Wipers, the Huns had mistaken the time of their Evening Hate, and started by blowing a house into the road on both sides of our car. These Jack Johnsons are sometimes rather a bore—our party had to wait for the shop people to emerge from their cellars, before we could buy our dinner, and then the third shell came and knocked the opposite house down. However, we had the goods first, so it didn't much matter. The driver of the car burnt his hand, picking a hot bit of shell out of the car's way, at a spot where another projectile had pitched and burst, fifty yards ahead of us, and we saw one of the funniest sights in the war—namely, a terrified Belgian civilian running for all he was worth, and taking a complete toss into the shell hole. We picked him up in the car, and his only thanks was a bitter

complaint at the jolty way in which the car ran over his own pavé.

On the way home, we saw one of our Avros hit while observing our heavy gun-fire. It was a horrid sight, as an Archie shell hit the engine full toss. Luckily, the pilot was able to come down safely, but unfortunately it was in the German lines and he was captured. He was at Eton with me, and we were very glad to hear that both he and his observer were practically unhurt ;—rotten luck, was it not ? But it is all part of our show and what we all expect more or less. To make up for it, next day we got a brace of their machines by a fair stalk and a fair fight in the air, and not by these horrible Archies.

Part of our job is to read the men's letters and censor them : our men are extraordinarily good at their work and I never wish for any better, but, taken all round, their letter-writing is not very original. This is not perhaps to be wondered at, as they are not allowed to give any news of the war, and they of course know that everything they write is to be censored. About the only topics that are discussed at all are the two most primitive ones, consisting chiefly of requests for food and raiment, and the sending of loves and kisses, the more indiscriminate the better. One hero wrote four identical letters to four different girls. One's own time for letter-writing is limited, and this effusion has taken parts of three whole days to write. It is done in the intervals of flying ; testing bombs and detonators and other fireworks, with which we try to enliven things occasionally ; seeing after guns, engines and machines ; avoiding Staff officers ; trying to talk French to Belgian N.C.O.s who are lent to us with their men for making improvements to our aerodrome ; and other work, such as drawing maps to satisfy the insatiable curiosity of the G.O.C., and devising means to appease the voracity of the fellow members of one's mess.

Now I am sitting on the ground under a sort of tent, where bits of my engine are being improved by my expert mechanic, and I am writing on a tin of castor-oil. My finger is still bandaged up, so the pencil is not very easy to work. After yesterday's fine summer-day, of course it is foggy and cold, raining and drizzling, so no one can fly, as nothing can be seen ; and there is a peaceful feel and a busy hum of machine tools in camp.

On the last foggy day that we were up, we saw something suddenly loom out of the fog, and, thinking it might be a Hun machine, swerved towards it, but only for a second ; luckily we swerved off again just in time to miss the cock on top of the steeple of a well-known church on a hill by a few feet—very unpleasant !—the ground being invisible at the time. One evening, on the way out for a raid, I came across a large eagle, flying at about fifteen hundred feet. The surprise was mutual. It was the first time in my life that I saw one of these fine birds completely lose its head, and in an attempt to avoid what it probably thought was a super-eagle, it warped its wings the wrong way and actually side-slipped like a badly flown aeroplane, falling—headlong—a few hundred feet. The last we saw of it, it had recovered, and was flying rapidly away in the opposite direction.

Yesterday my observer and I had an extraordinary experience when chasing an Albatross biplane. While behind his own lines the Boche was some 12,000 feet up, and when we first saw him our machine was some 2000 feet lower. The German tried to get away and dive home. There was no chance of catching him at the time, so we turned away and went and hid in a big cloud, in the hope that the German would come back to continue his work in our absence. This of course is quite an ordinary manœuvre and usually works. Once inside the cloud, however, trouble began, as it rapidly developed into the worst type of thunderstorm cloud, in which the air currents are very rapid and revolve in a most disconcerting manner. It was also very wet and cold, and quite dark. This made flying extraordinarily difficult, and after a short time we had not the faintest idea where we were or whither we were going. Things started falling about inside the nacelle, and it was soon quite obvious that the machine was flying or falling on anything but a level keel. Finding my automatic pistol trickling between my legs, I turned my eyes inside the machine and anxiously watched the instruments, which I was horrified to see were behaving very oddly ; for instance, the compass was gyrating madly, like a puppy chasing its own tail ; the aneroid-needle, which was supposed to show our height above ground, was quivering with the rapid variations of atmospheric pressure, but yet enabled me to grasp the alarming fact that the earth was approaching at an extremely rapid rate. The speed indicator, which in this particular aeroplane

consisted of a column of red liquid actuated by pipes, connected with a special type of nozzle fixed on one of the struts of the machine, amused itself by gurgling up and down between thirty and a hundred miles an hour ; and the red liquid added injury to insult by spilling itself over my new breeches. Besides this, the rudder, the elevators and the balancing ailerons sometimes took effect and sometimes did not ; all of which added to the terror of the approaching flashes of lightning, the horrible feeling of being utterly unable to control the machine, which was by this time careering about in the noise and darkness like a frightened horse.

The German aeroplane, too, was known to be about, and there might well have been an awful collision, without a second's warning, in the middle of a thunderstorm cloud.

Suddenly the observer looked round with a grin and pointed to a light patch in the darkness ; this rapidly cleared, and, as the visibility increased, I recognised one of the canals. It was not underneath me, as one might expect ; it was right out, beyond one wing-tip. The machine, therefore, was obviously falling in a quick spiral towards the canal.

The worst of the vortex having been safely passed, the damp of the cloud changed into sleet, which froze on the machine and on our faces and goggles ; so that in addition to attending to the machine and gun, both of us unfortunate occupants had to be continually wiping our glasses. Our clothes, too, were wet through, outside from the cloud, and inside as the result of the very violent exercise taken in hanging on to the bucking aeroplane and in controlling it. Never have I worked so hard for mere existence, and never have I had a more unpleasant time.

But all was now comparatively plain sailing, and once the machine was got under control, everything was more or less comfortable again. The machine was actually in the cloud for about a quarter of an hour, and had flown some ten or twelve miles and had dropped 5000 or 6000 feet. To add to the entertainment, the storm had burst during the process, and the thunder and lightning were studied at close range. Man-made shells are pretty beastly and are apt to kill if they hit one, or go bang near enough, but they aren't nearly so frightening as the Almighty's automatic display, if you happen to be on the stage. The enemy did open a pretty hot fire on the machine when it emerged, but we could not really be bothered on that occasion to take any notice of it. A

further search was made for the German machine, but no trace of it could be found anywhere in the sky, so we supposed that the fright it got was enough for it and that it had gone home for good, in which it showed its wisdom.

Hot weather now with a strong north-easterly gale—we can just fly against it and that is about all. Some machines can hardly do that and therefore make an easier target for Archibald and his big brother the Crump from Krupps.

I am sending you back a bit of shell which broke a rib in one of the wings and then stuck in another. This is rather unusual, so perhaps you may care to keep it. It may interest you to know that we were flying at a height well over 10,000 feet—a pretty good shot, was it not? Luckily it didn't do any damage that mattered.

We have recently had some very interesting and exciting work to do. We had to come down to the low altitude of about 5000 feet to reconnoitre a small piece of country very carefully, for a big long-range German siege gun, that had been annoying some of our troops well behind the lines. We took several photographs and searched the country minutely with our field-glasses, and eventually found four or five places, any one of which might quite possibly provide shelter and concealment for this big German piece.

The photographs having been developed, the number of possible places was somewhat reduced, and we then went up again and searched for the gun in the marked spots and took more photographs. Of course the German gunners were much too clever to loose off their piece when we were searching; the flash of discharge would have given away their position at once. For three days we searched and photographed, up and down, over a few square miles, using up several dozen of the best plates procurable, with a camera specially made for the work. Eventually we proved the existence of a small light railway—almost a toy—along which trucks, containing one shell only, were pushed by hand. This railway, being connected to one of the Belgian State Railways in German hands, provided the necessities of life and ammunition for the daily Hate of the gun. The blast of the gun had also destroyed and damaged some small trees and bushes on each side of the line of fire, and this gave us a

further clue. The gun itself had been mounted on one of the famous concrete foundations, inside a small building which was part of an innocent-looking farm. It was completely hidden from view, and fired out through the big double doors of the barn. Having at last solved the problem of the position of this gun, it was arranged to destroy it next day. One of our own heavy guns was brought up within range and concealed behind a hill during the night. The concealment was so perfect that when we went up next day, we were at first bitterly disappointed, because we thought that our gun had failed to arrive ; however, a welcome signal from the ground informed us that it was ready to perform its share of the entertainment. The gunners had been previously shown the position of the farm, with the German gun inside it, on the map, but they could not see it and had to fire entirely by calculations. The first shot went a few hundred yards short ; the second a hundred yards over it ; the third a little bit to the right ; the fourth and fifth demolished the farm, with our latest form of high-explosive shell ; the sixth and seventh also went straight in and completed the destruction of the gun and its ammunition supply, which was stored quite close, there being nothing left except a large volume of thick black smoke. The explosions were terrific and were audible for miles around.

An aeroplane also dropped an assortment of high-explosive and incendiary bombs, and nothing could have lived in the inferno, which half an hour previously had apparently been a harmless Belgian farm. We came back and took a couple of photographs, when the smoke and dirt had drifted away with the wind. It is a curious commentary on the War, that while the opposing infantry were fighting at about fifty yards range, the German gunners should have been shooting from a position of comparative quiet, five miles behind *their* infantry, at an undefended town some ten miles behind *our* infantry ; and that *our* gun should have been shooting from another quiet position well behind our lines at the *German* gun, none of the gunners concerned on either side having ever seen their target at all ; and it is here that the supremacy of the air told heavily. A German Aviatik aeroplane, fitted with wireless, had come over and had attempted to direct the fire of the German gun ; it did not have time to complete its work before it was attacked by two of our swift fighting machines and brought down, both its occupants being wounded and the

machine captured ; consequently the damage done by this extraordinarily powerful weapon was not at all in proportion to the wonderful care and forethought bestowed on the manufacture and positioning of the piece. Although no German machine attacked ours with any success during the process of locating the gun and its final destruction, yet they had surrounded the spot with powerful anti-aircraft guns, which fired high-explosive shrapnel ; there were also one or two high-angle Howitzers of approximately 8 inch bore, firing an enormous high-explosive shell, which burst with a tremendous rush of black smoke, and disturbed the air for a considerable area, to such an extent that it made flying always difficult and sometimes extremely dangerous, apart from the holes which the fragments of shell themselves make in one's pet aeroplane.

On one of these occasions one of these big shells exploded so close that it capsized the machine, and the pilot was thrown out of his seat and found himself hanging on with one hand and one foot. The observer also had an extremely narrow escape from being thrown out, some of the loose gear in the machine falling down vertically for a mile and a half and, we hope, hitting some German on the head. The pilot managed to scramble back into his seat and get the machine to resume a more dignified position. It had, however, fallen about 600 or 800 feet, and both the occupants were amused and greatly relieved to see the next batch of shells burst about this height above their heads. The Germans of course knew, or guessed, what we were after and were much annoyed with our persistency. Over a hundred shells of various sorts were counted, bursting in the air, within two minutes, by an onlooker on the ground, and it is not surprising that the machine was frequently hit ; but we were lucky enough to manage to get back to our own side of the trenches when we were sufficiently damaged to be forced to come down.

I never seem to get accustomed to being shelled when they get close, and I think it is beastly. It is rather different being in a trench, when the whole trench is being shelled, and where one can usually get some cover, but in the air it is an offensively personal ' Hate ' on the part of the Strafers. One's aeroplane is the target of the guns, and, if low enough down, of the machine guns and rifles too ; and the pilot himself is the bull's-eye in the centre of the target.

It is bad enough for a pilot, but it must be much worse for those very gallant fellows who come up as observers and photographers,

because they know that if their pilot is killed there is very little hope of their ever getting down alive themselves. I never believe those fellows who say they are not afraid. Anybody who has imagination must be frightened at times, and it has often been shown that any-one without imagination can never hope to fly at all well. However, all this makes no difference and we go up cheerily all the same, in fact I think that a Flying Corps mess is about the cheeriest place that I have ever been in. The work is extraordinarily interesting and at times very exciting, although we have our bad spells of dulness, when we have to come down after a long and tiring patrol in the bitter cold and report to our chief ' nothing doing.'

I have given you rather a long description of one particular job of work, out of many that we are constantly doing. This sort of work is going on more or less incessantly over the whole front, while other machines are employed in reconnaissance—that is, searching for enemy movements and new enemy positions, and photographing them when found ; or in directing the fire of our artillery by observing the fall of their shells, and then signalling back by wireless or other means, so that the gunners are enabled in practice to drop their shells on any spot they like about the size of a tennis court, within the entire range of their weapons.

The other work which some of us do, and which is better known to the public, consists in dropping bombs and engaging the enemy aeroplanes in the air. We nearly always come off top dog on these occasions, but of course there are, I am sorry to say, times when a machine does not come home.

I am writing this letter while my machine is being mended and the engines overhauled, after the last few strenuous days.

Some of us are members of the local 'Frog Club.' There are two classes of members in the Frog Club : one class shoots the frogs—not with ammunition, for it is too precious, but with catapults, home-made out of local fences, while the rubber is provided, I regret to say, at the national expense, out of ' absorbers, shock, rubber part-worn ' (as we say in our lists of spare parts) from smashed aeroplane under-carriages. It is contended that shrapnel in the form of fine gravel is the best for frogs ; but the expert shot, who, when he is not flying, is a Captain in the Royal Garrison Artillery, thinks that a single bullet about the size of half a brick—or perhaps a shade less—is better. He says he gets quite close, but

he has never yet hit one. He is now designing a highly elaborate telescopic sight for use with his catapult, and we encourage this industry on his part, as it keeps him away from disturbing the waters. Personally, I belong to the fishing section, and our implement consists of a rod, made of broken parts of our machine, which have been shot through and joined together in the most approved split-cane-rod fashion, while for bait we use a piece of red flannel mounted on a bent pin.

We have quite learned from the French the advantage of Frog as an article of diet, although we find it necessary to persuade our guests to eat them, by calling them quail, or similar reminiscences of a London dance at the Ritz. The demand for game has been more than the supply, so our mess cook solves the problem by catching them with, I think, a net and a bucket. He is no sportsman, but withal an excellent cook.

Another early morning ; up at daybreak, looking for Huns in the air. One German up, an L.V.G. two-seater—obviously very sleepy, and even more annoyed at being turned out of his bed than we were. We met him coming up towards our lines while we were at 9000 feet. He didn't apparently see us, so we dived 5000 feet on top of him and loosed off our machine gun. He was badly hit and his engine smashed, but we could not manage to kill the pilot, who pluckily dived his machine steadily down, with our own close behind him, over some well-concealed anti-aircraft guns.

They hit us all right, as they usually do nowadays, but not vitally ; and Brother Boche was crumpled up when he landed—quite good fun, but they are too scarce and shy for one to be at all certain of a hunt on any given morning. They know our fighting machines by sight, and nearly always bolt and dive for home, unless one can catch them unbeknownst, which is not very often.

Casualties have been rather heavy in the R.F.C. lately, partly owing to their trick of leading us over their hidden anti-aircraft guns and Rocket Batteries. One Howitzer in particular has been too good a shot for some of us, so we arranged to have a morning Hate against this particular Crump and thoroughly strafed it, wrecking it absolutely with one of our Heavies.

The Boches have had at least as good as they gave, and flying seems no longer to be a popular pastime among them.

The last day or two we have been on patrol duty in a fighting machine over a given area. This consists in flying all over the shop, and protecting our machines which are doing fire control, or photo, or reconnaissance work, or other special jobs; the 'protection' consists partly in drawing the fire of the 'Archies' (i.e. the regular anti-aircraft shrapnel quick-firing guns) and 'Crumps' (i.e. Howitzers which fire high-explosive shells from 5 to 8-inch) and partly in keeping off Hun machines from being too inquisitive as to the doings of our aeroplanes and the movements of troops on our side of the trenches. The area one covers varies, but is often about 50 square miles, and one's air-speed varies from 45 to 75 miles per hour, except when diving, when the speed goes up beyond the range of the indicator, say up to 125 m.p.h. To this may be added, or subtracted from it, the part or whole of the true wind-speed—according to one's course in relation to the wind. In windy weather this has often meant an additional 50 miles per hour, so our speed over the ground is frequently up to the standard of the police-trap at home! One sometimes covers a couple of miles on the floor in a minute or less, the height varying according to the day, etc., between about 5000 and 10,000 feet. This is fairly high up, but occasionally we have to go to 12,000 or even 15,000, though I have never had to do so yet. At these great heights we climb slowly and the engine and oneself both prefer to keep one's level, as it is hard work for both to get up much beyond this, and it is very cold too. The anti-aircraft shells can reach us even here, though not very easily.

The chief actual result of Patrol Orders is that we are on the look-out for Huns in the air, and 'Archies' and 'Crumps' too. Whenever we see the former we go for them, not necessarily direct, but often manoeuvre a lot for tactical position first.

Very often, if the weather is good, we take a few assorted bombs to drop, in case a good target appears over the Hun lines. They weigh a lot, and so we like to get rid of them as soon as possible. There is a gunner to work the guns, and he is either an officer or a specially trained mechanic, with a straight eye and no nerves.

To-day, Thursday, it has luckily been raining, so the mechanics

have been patching up, trueing up the rigging and so on. A day's rest is badly needed by the machines, and we are not averse to it, so we've been into P—— buying coal and provisions for the Mess, of which I am still doing President. A successful day in that way too ! We got coal at a fair price from a man who is a very large brewer and general merchant ; and in return we gave a lift in the car to his wife and daughter. They have a splendid house with a wonderful garden, and well-kept glass-houses in great quantity. The house has only one corner chipped off by a Jack Johnson, and the garden is O.K. and quite the best I've seen here—lovely ! They gave us—two of us went in—an excellent lunch and tea, and we brought some of them back in the car, which was also laden up with provisions and furniture.

Wisely enough, their house is deserted and they are living *pro tem.* in a farm near us, as refugees, though one or two live in the cellar of the P—— house. It is a comic world. They don't seem to mind much, and are very cheery and kind to us flying folk. We each walked back, with a present of two bottles of wine, and the shuvver had one too ! It turned out to be excellent claret.

It's as well to be amused here if we can. One's ' expectation of life ' isn't very much just now.

(To be continued.)

PRESS BUREAU: PASSED FOR PUBLICATION.

THE TUTOR'S STORY.¹

BY THE LATE CHARLES KINGSLEY,
REVISED AND COMPLETED BY HIS DAUGHTER, LUCAS MALET.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

AND now I had before me the task of telling the dear boy what must modify, and might completely alter, the course and complexion of his life. No light duty this, or small responsibility. It was, I felt, a great crisis, a great turning-point. In what spirit would he meet it, and how should I acquit myself? I was glad to have a little leisure in which to shake off the terrible impressions of yesterday and get my mind into a more normal attitude before delivering my news.

No account of what had happened could be in the papers under a couple of days; so I had every reason to suppose Hartover would not receive any hint of it before we met. I arranged with Lavender, moreover, that, as his connection with Féodore had no direct bearing on the case, Hartover's name was to be carefully kept out of such reports as appeared. This done, I tried to occupy myself with the books, pictures, and other treasures the house contained; assiduously waited on by William, meanwhile, who, from his readiness to linger and to talk, suspected more, as I judged, than he dared ask or than I very certainly intended to tell him.

But my leisure suffered interruption sooner than I anticipated, and in a manner calculated to set William's curiosity more than ever on edge.

On the second day—it was a Sunday—Lavender called about ten o'clock, bringing me news of which more hereafter; suffice it that a great burden was lifted off my mind. Having been prevented attending morning service by the detective's visit, I went to church in the evening; but returned little the better, spiritually, I fear, for an hour's sermon in which the preacher—a portly, well-nourished personage just then very popular in the fashionable world—dilated with much unction upon the terrors of hell, and the extreme difficulty of avoiding them, the impossibility of so doing, in fact, for ninety-nine hundredths of even 'professing Christians'—so called—let alone the not inconsiderable remainder of the

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human race. What a gospel to set forth ! What a Moloch to offer as supreme object of adoration ! Yet this congregation, so representative of rank and wealth, listened quite complacently, without the smallest evidence of criticism or of revolt. Had they no heart to feel with ? No brains with which to think ? I walked homeward disturbed and sad.

Before the portico of Lord Longmoor's house stood a travelling carriage, off which the men-servants were loading down a mighty array of boxes and trunks. And it was Lady Longmoor herself, surely—I could not mistake the buoyant step, the gay poise of the head, as of one that should say, 'Look, good people all, look ! I like it, I am well worth it'—who swept up the steps and into the lighted hall ! Why this sudden descent of her Magnificence, and whence ?

I made my way round to the side-door and let myself in, unperceived as I hoped.

But in the corridor William met me with a somewhat distracted countenance.

'My lord is asking for you, sir,' he said. 'He arrived back about half an hour ago. I persuaded him to dine at once. His lordship seems quite upset, sir—not at all well. But he was very urgent to see you directly, whenever you came in.'

I own my pulse quickened as I went along the corridor and into the dining-room, where I found Hartover at table. He turned round, but without rising, and held out both hands to me.

'Oh ! there you are, thank goodness,' he said. 'I have been haunted by a childish fear you would have vanished—been spirited back to Cambridge.'

I forced a laugh and inquired after Lord Longmoor.

'It is genuine this time. My father is really ill—so ill that I felt obliged to take the disagreeable things he said to me in good part. Oh ! you were right to make me go to him, Brownlow. And I must go again. It is scandalous the way he is left to the mercy of doctors, and parsons, and servants—such a crew, upon my word. My stepmother away somewhere—of course amusing herself—I suppose up in the North with—oh ! we'll name no names. Safer not'—he added with a sneer.

I enlightened him as to her ladyship's present whereabouts.

'So much the better,' he returned. 'Only she will be disappointed if she imagines I intend to clear out. She must put up with my neighbourhood, and hear what I have to say, too, whether

she likes it or not. By the way, though, Brownlow, have you dined ?'

I felt incapable of eating a mouthful of food just then, so lied, heaven forgive me, telling him I had ; and, drawing up a chair, sat down beside the table at right angles to him.

' Yes, I must certainly go to my father again,' Hartover repeated. ' Disagreeable as he invariably manages to be to me, I believe he would have been glad if I had stayed on now. But I couldn't—I couldn't. The suspense was too great. Have you seen her, Brownlow ?'

' Yes,' I said. This was no time for elaborate explanations or fine phrases. The simple truth simply told would be best. ' And your suspicions were not unfounded.'

The boy pushed away his plate, set his elbow on the table, rested his cheek in his hand, turning his face towards me. It had gone thin and very white ; but he was perfectly composed, bracing himself to bear what might be coming with the pride of his high-breding.

' Very well. Go on,' he said.

' She was Marsigli's accomplice. She instigated the theft because she wanted him removed and silenced. He stood between her and the fulfilment of her ambition—of her design to marry you.'

' Go on,' said Hartover, as I paused.

' But we can afford to judge her duplicity less harshly, because she has paid the extreme penalty of it—the heaviest penalty which can be exacted.'

' What ?'

Hartover's lips formed the words, although no sound issued from them.

' She and Marsigli had a violent altercation, with accusations and abuse on both sides. In a fit of ungovernable fury he stabbed her.'

Again the boy's lips formed a soundless question, while from white his face went grey. Sweat broke out on his forehead ; but he still remained composed, still looked at me steadily.

' Yes,' I told him. ' Féodore is dead.'

Then his eyes closed, and I myself turned queerly cold and faint. He looked so young, so almost fragile, that it seemed an intolerable cruelty thus to deal him blow on blow. I could have cried aloud to him to forgive me ; yet to hesitate, still more to plead for myself, would be a greater cruelty still.

'You are quite sure of—of your facts, Brownlow?' he said, at last.

'Quite sure,' I answered. 'The police had traced Marsigli to the house on a former occasion. They were watching for his coming, and called on me to identify him. I was present. I saw what took place.'

Here William came in bringing another course. Hartover motioned him peremptorily to the door—through which, with a backward look of astonishment, inquiry, alarm, the poor fellow, tray and all, fled.

'I do not understand.' Hartover spoke slowly and carefully, each word standing oddly apart. 'Perhaps I am stupid—but why he—Marsigli—should—'

And there he stopped.

'It was an act of vengeance, of revenge. She had deserted him; and now, as he believed, betrayed him to the police in the hope of being finally rid of him.'

'Deserted—how deserted?' Hartover demanded, with sudden arrogance.

Fédore was his wife. He and she were married here in London three years ago. A copy of the marriage certificate, taken from the register of the church where the ceremony was performed, was shown me this morning. It is perfectly in order and establishes the legality of the marriage absolutely.'

'The—then'—he asked—'am I to understand that my marriage—'

'Is void. A fraud—legally Féodore was nothing to you.'

The boy's hand sank on to the table, with a jangle of glasses overset among the silver. He turned away his head.

The moment was critical. I awaited the outcome of it in rather sickening dread. Hartover's physical courage I knew to be above reproach—of the stuff which charges gaily up to the mouths of the enemy's guns, or leads a forlorn hope. But, here, moral not physical courage was on trial. Had he sufficient moral stamina to stand the test? And, as the seconds passed, thankful conviction grew on me that he had. There would be no storm now, either of anger or of tears. Hysterics and blind rage alike are the sign of weakness, superficial, and, as often as not, a mere matter of nerves. But here we had got down to the solid rock of character, of inbred tradition and instinctive pride of race. By the greatness of the deception practised on him, of the discovery

that he had been the prey and plaything of a designing woman whose care and love masked intensity of worldly greed, and of the humiliation consequent on this, the boy's self-respect was too deeply involved. Whatever he suffered he would keep to himself.

Still, I own his next move, when it came, surprised me by what I can only call its virility of conception.

He threw back his head, got up, walked across to the fireplace and, with his hand on the bell-rope, the ghost of a smile—the bravest, most piteous smile I have ever seen—upon his lips, said :

‘ I'm right in thinking, am I not, Brownlow, you told me my stepmother arrived just as you came in ? ’

I answered in the affirmative, not a little perplexed as to what was to follow.

He rang, and when William appeared gave orders her ladyship be informed that Lord Hartover requested to see her.

‘ Let Lady Longmoor be told I will be in the white drawing-room, and that I beg she will join me there with as little delay as possible.’

Then to me :

‘ You will come too, Brownlow, please. I prefer to have a witness to our conversation.’

So to the white drawing-room we went—a small but lovely room, on the walls of which hung a couple of superb Vandykes, portraits of a former Lord Hartover and his brother, Stephen Esdaile, exquisite if slightly effeminate-looking young gallants of unhappy Charles the First's court. I had noticed these pictures, with admiration, yesterday when making my round of the house. In Stephen Esdaile I discovered, as I thought, a distinct resemblance to his descendant my ex-pupil, granting the latter long curled love-locks and a yellow silk brocade coat.

Her Magnificence kept us waiting some ten minutes, to arrive at last with a charming effect of haste, still wearing a brown travelling dress, a white lace scarf thrown negligently over her fair head. She was all smiles, all pretty excitement.

‘ Dearest George—what a charming surprise ! ’

And she advanced, preparing to bestow on him a chastely maternal kiss. But the boy avoided it dexterously, and bent low over her hand, just not touching it with his lips instead. Her ladyship, as I judged by her rising colour, was not insensible to the slight though she rattled on gaily enough.

'And our good Mr. Brownlow too! How really delightful! Surprise on surprise. But, George'—

Her tone changed, a note of anxiety, real or assumed, piercing the playfulness, not to say levity, of it.

'Is anything wrong? You look positively ghastly, my poor child—as white as a sheet. Tell me—nothing is the matter—nothing serious?'—

'Oh dear, no,' Hartover answered. 'Nothing serious is ever the matter in our family, is it? We bask in perpetual sunshine, are clothed in scarlet with other delights, fare sumptuously every day and all the rest of it. Serious? Of course not. What could touch us?'

Lady Longmoor smiled, raising her eyebrows and throwing me a meaning glance. She believed, or pretended to believe, the boy was not sober, and wished me to know as much.

'If it amuses you to talk nonsense, do so by all means,' she said. 'Only I am afraid you will have to forgive my not stopping here very long to listen to it, for I am simply expiring of fatigue'—she stifled a neat little yawn—'and want to go quietly to bed.'

'I am sorry,' Hartover answered courteously, 'if I have been inconsiderate. But I thought you might care to have some news of my father. I am just back from Bath.'

'Indeed!' Lady Longmoor exclaimed. 'And pray who, or what, took you to poor dead-alive innocent Bath?'

'My father sent for me, and, what's more, saw me. He struck me as rather badly out of sorts and lonely.'

'Ah! yes,' she said, turning to me with the prettiest air of distress imaginable, 'it is so terribly trying, Mr. Brownlow. I cannot bear leaving my dear lord in his wretched state of health. It makes me miserable. But what is to be done? Some one must look into things from time to time, you know. It is wrong to leave dear beautiful Hover entirely to the agent, the servants, and so on. Of course, they are as faithful and devoted as possible—but still it is only wise—don't you think?—only right—I should go there occasionally. Though I hate business, I do what I can.'

'I hope to relieve you of the bulk of those bothers in future,' Hartover put in quietly.

'You—you charming scatterbrain? What next? No, *mon enfant*, no—they are not *de votre âge*, responsibility and business worries. Continue to play at soldiers and amuse yourself while you can.'

'I am tired of playing at soldiers : so confoundedly tired of it that, once I am my own master—I come of age next month, you remember,—I mean to send in my papers. There is nothing to keep me in London now'—

'Nothing—nobody, to keep you in London now ?' she interrupted teasingly.

I listened in some trepidation. She trod on dangerous ground. Had the boy sufficient reserve force, after the ordeal he had so lately been through, to keep his temper ?

'No, nothing,' he repeated. 'I think there had better be no misunderstanding between us upon that point—and upon some others. They need clearing up—have needed it for a long time past. That is the reason of my asking to see you to-night. In the ordinary course of events we don't, as you know, often meet. I have to seize my opportunity when I am fortunate enough to get it. Plainly, I do not believe my father can live very long'—

'And plainly,' she retorted, 'I do not think his life is at all likely to be lengthened, dearest George, by your troubling him with absurd plans for throwing up your commission, leaving London, and taking over the management of things in general at Hover. For years Jack Esdaile has employed himself, in the sweetest way, just out of pure friendship and kindness of heart, in looking after the Yorkshire property, and your father has been more than satisfied. But it is too ridiculous for me to argue with you about it. Things will go on in the future precisely as they have gone on in the past. Only I really must protest against your father being disturbed and annoyed directly my back is turned. We all thought you had settled down more of late, George, and had grown a little more reasonable.'

'Of late ? Since when, pray ?' Hartover demanded.

'Oh ! why since'—

Lady Longmoor looked down as though embarrassed.

'But after all, what is the use of mincing matters ?' she went on. 'I cannot help knowing you young men have your *affaires de cœur*—your entanglements, shall we say ?—and that these, although of course objectionable, things one doesn't talk about, do sometimes have a steadyng effect which conduces to the peace and comfort of your—the young men's, I mean—near relations.'

'You are speaking of an entanglement of mine ?' Hartover asked.

'Yes,' she replied. 'An entanglement, an infatuation, which,

as Mr. Brownlow knows, I have deplored for years and done my best to combat ; but which—remember the person had already left my service—has, I understand, recently been legalised.'

' Who told you this ? ' Hartover said hoarsely.

Lady Longmoor raised her eyes and glanced at me, smiling.

' That good, faithful creature, Halidane.—Wait a moment, George. Let me finish my sentence. He had the information, as I understand, direct from Mr. Brownlow, to whom you yourself wrote announcing the event.'

The boy gave me a look of sorrowful reproach, remembrance of which, even at this distance of time, blinds my eyes with tears as I write.

' You too, old man,' he said, very softly. ' Gad, it needed but that.'

And he turned on his heel and moved towards the door.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BOTH by profession and inclination I am a man of peace. But for once my sluggish blood boiled ; and it would have been a nasty hour for Halidane had his smug and rosy countenance come within reach of my fists. Many annoyances I had forgiven him, many more was prepared to forgive. But that he should sow discord between Hartover and me at this particular juncture outpaced my power of forgiveness. The fellow had kept a stone in his pocket for years. Now he threw it—meanly and spitefully, by the hand of a woman, thereby making it more difficult for me to parry the blow or to retaliate. Hence I subscribed most heartily, I am afraid, to any and every evil which might befall him in this world or the next !

' Either your ladyship's memory is at fault, or your informant is guilty of a remarkably odious falsehood,' I said, so grimly as to disconcert my fair hearer not a little, I thought. ' I should have supposed it unnecessary to declare that I have never discussed Lord Hartover or his affairs with Mr. Halidane. Any such discussion would be repugnant to me in the highest degree. If Mr. Halidane is acquainted with the contents of any letter addressed to me by Lord Hartover, he must have acquired that knowledge by methods reflecting but scanty credit upon his sense of honour,

let alone his sense of common honesty. Yet I cannot pretend to be greatly surprised. For on one occasion, at least, I have had reason to accuse him of entering my college rooms, for purposes of his own, during my absence.'

And I recounted, very briefly, what I had seen and heard on the night of the fire at the Master's Lodge.

Lady Longmoor, none too sure of the success of her last move, seized upon the new topic with avidity.

'Ah! yes,' she cried; 'we heard about that from Dr. Marston. He was loud in praise of your wonderful courage in saving the life of his niece. According to him you performed prodigies of valour. I was so interested in meeting her—Miss Davis, no, Dynevors—of course, I remember, Dynevors—quite a nice girl and—and so very much in love. Oh! yes; it was all extraordinarily romantic, you know, George—just like a story in a book.'

The impertinence of these great folk! The tone of condescension and patronage in which her ladyship alluded to Alice Dynevors was by no means lost on me; but, I am afraid, ten thousand Alice Dynevors and their impertinent treatment at the hands of fine ladies weighed as rather less than nothing with me, just now, as against Hartover's apparent alienation. To reconquer his confidence and sympathy, to convince him of my unswerving loyalty, was the sole and only thing I cared about.

During the whole interview we had been kept standing, since Lady Longmoor remained standing herself. I fancied she had an eye to rapid withdrawal whenever a promising strategic opportunity presented itself. As she spoke, she too moved towards the door. But Hartover, who, to my great comfort, had paused, listening both to her impertinently enthusiastic flourish and my disclaimer, faced about blocking her passage.

'One moment,' he said. 'Has Mr. Halidane, may I inquire, crowned his amiable mission as scoundalmonger by communicating this piece of stolen information to my father?'

'No. He felt it was his duty to tell your father, but very properly consulted me first. And I dissuaded him.'

'How charming of you!' from Hartover, not without sarcasm.

'I begged him to wait—not to speak of it yet. Later, I felt, circumstances might not improbably arise which would compel us to break it to your father. But naturally I wished to spare him as long as—'

'Pray, is that a threat?'

'Hardly a threat. But a warning—yes, possibly, dearest George. Take my advice and lay it to heart. And, since plain speaking seems the fashion to-night, you know your manner towards me is excessively strange—barely civil, in fact. Have you been drinking, by chance ?'

The boy shook his head ; but with an air ! Insolence being to the fore, it was diamond cut diamond as between stepmother and stepson.

'Oh ! dear, no. I have touched nothing stronger than water to-day,' he said.

'Really ! I am sorry to hear it, as that leaves no valid excuse for your behaviour. But I am tired ; and, frankly, I can't admit any right on your part to keep me here listening first to nonsense, and then to incivility. Good-night, Mr. Brownlow. I do not know how long you propose to stay, so good-bye, too—in case, which is possible, I do not see you again. And now, George, be good enough to open the door for me.'

From all which I derived the conviction that, for once, her ladyship had pretty thoroughly lost her temper. Then, as Hartover did not move :

'My dear George, do you hear ? Even if you unfortunately have no love for your mother, you may still pay some respect, some ordinary courtesy towards your father's wife.'

'For my father's wife I have all possible respect,' he began.

My lady's dark eyebrows went up until they nearly met her fair hair.

'Indeed ! You have a most original fashion of showing it !'

'But—for I, too, can issue a warning—I have very little of either for my cousin Jack Esdaile's mistress.'

An instant of stupefaction.

Then : 'How dare you ! How dare you !' Lady Longmoor stormed.

She took a couple of steps forward, with the intention, I verily believe, of boxing Hartover's ears soundly. But he was too adroit for her. Catching her by both hands, he held them—not roughly, but with a gallant, if naughty grace, vastly engaging. Some colour had come into his face. His eyes and lips laughed saucily.

'No, no, your Magnificence,' he said. 'That belongs to the past, to the old nursery days, here and at Hover, when I was too small to hit back. I have grown up since then, and we are more evenly matched.'

Ought I to interfere? To do so was to risk losing Hartover's trust and affection for ever. Therefore I thought, and still think, not.

Meanwhile, whether contact with physical force—to her a novel experience—tamed her, or whether conscience was the determining factor, I am uncertain; but—

'You young boor!' she exclaimed; and there ended all direct protest. For, at once, she began to try and make terms with him—an uneasiness, not to say an edge of fear, perceptible behind the fine chill of her manner. 'Pray, what do you expect to gain by insulting me thus?'

'What I have never succeeded in gaining before—a clear stage and no favour.'

'Be a little more explicit, please—that is, if you really have anything to be explicit about.'

'Oh! dear, yes; plenty, plenty. I've no lack of material,' Hartover answered. 'But won't you come and sit down, since you are tired, so that we may talk it over comfortably?'

And, releasing one hand, the boy led her across the lovely room to a large white and gold settee—prettily, as he might have led some charming partner after a dance—and, finally, sat down there beside her.

'Is it necessary that a third person be present,' she asked, 'at this extraordinary interview?'

'I prefer Brownlow to stay, if he will,' Hartover answered. 'It is desirable in your interests just as much as in my own.'

'A packed jury! However, I am at your mercy—two men to one woman. If you command I cannot do otherwise than obey.'

And she folded her hands in her lap, settling her beautiful shoulders back against the soft white and gold cushions.

'Now for this very chivalrous bargaining,' she said scornfully. 'For a bargain is just what it comes to, neither more nor less, I imagine.'

'Yes,' Hartover answered; while as he spoke sauciness, laughter, almost youth itself, died out of his face, leaving it grave, drawn, and very pallid. 'You are right. Between you and me, as matters now stand, your Magnificence, it all comes to the dirty, low-caste business of a bargain—and a hard one. Only let us both speak the truth, please, in as far as we are able. It may

save some ugly fighting hereafter.—You say you heard of the legalising of a certain entanglement from Mr. Halidane. Was that your first knowledge of it ?'

'Rumours may have reached me earlier.'

'Through whom ?'—Hartover went white about the lips—'Through Féodore ?'

'You forget, she had left my service.'

'But had no rumours reached you through her—Féodore—of another marriage, about three years ago ?'

Lady Longmoor moved slightly, throwing back her head. She was very angry, but she was also very nervous—so, at least, I fancied.

'This persistent asking of riddles becomes monotonous,' she said. 'Of what exactly are you speaking, my dear George ?'

'Of Féodore's marriage to your butler, Marsigli. They were confidential servants, to both of whom we all understood you were a good deal attached. It seems improbable, when they married, you should be ignorant of the fact.'

'Oh ! there you are totally mistaken,' she said, with a laugh. 'The private lives of my servants are no concern of mine. So long as they serve me well, and there aren't any scandals in the household, I am not so foolish as to invite annoyance by asking questions. If they are silent, I am silent likewise. I have no belief in fussing—especially when the establishment runs smooth. And then—tastes no doubt differ—but I really have more important and interesting things to think about than sentimental complications on the part of the maids.'

'Even when one of the maids proposes to become your daughter-in-law ?' the boy put in bitterly. 'Come, your Magnificence, what's the use of hedging. Did you or didn't you know ?'

But here her ladyship saw fit to change her tactics by making a spirited raid into the enemy's country.

'And if rumours, again, had reached me,' she asked, 'what then ?'

'This—that, knowing, you still said nothing, made no attempt to prevent my doing this infamous thing.'

'Stop, stop,' Lady Longmoor cried. 'You forget there is quite another aspect of the case. If I did not intervene it was simply because I knew intervention to be hopeless. Would you have listened to me ? Have you ever listened ? I am only human,

after all, and my stock of patience, alas ! is not inexhaustible. You can hardly deny having made heavy drafts on it, my dear George, for a number of years now.'

' I deny nothing under that head,' Hartover said quietly.

' Your escapades—to call them nothing worse—have caused us—my poor lord and me—endless vexation and trouble. I was weary of hearing about them from—oh ! well, from a number of different sources. People are not slow in repeating what is offensive, and your name has become a positive by-word in your regiment for every description of objectionable folly. Is it surprising if, at last, I gave up in despair ? No doubt, it was wrong of me '—she glanced with very moving appeal in my direction—' but really, things came to a point last winter, when I was tempted to wash my hands of you altogether. You must go your own way. I was helpless to restrain you. All I asked was some little respite from worry, from the perpetual wear and tear of concealing these wretched stories from your father.'

' Thank you. I understand,' Hartover said. ' And so, other plans for wrecking me having miscarried—you and Jack Esdale devised a good many—you connived at this abomination, just as you connived at—at—her running after me at Hover long ago, before Brownlow came. You encouraged her going to see me when I was ill—she told me so herself, told me that and a lot more too. And—'

He paused, leaning forward, looking on the ground, while his speech grew thick and unsteady.

' And the fact—however vile the deception she practised on me—that she was kind, nursed me, helped me fight against my bad habits, pulled me through, does not lessen your guilt by one iota either towards her or towards me. Her death lies at your door. Marsigli, poor brute, may have struck the actual blow, but you are responsible for it.'

' Death ? Fédore dead ?—Marsigli ?—What do you mean, George ? What, in heaven's name, are you talking about ? '

In her extreme excitement and agitation Lady Longmoor seized the boy by the arm ; but he shook himself free, getting up and backing away from her with a movement of uncontrollable revolt.

' Oh ! yes,' he said ; ' I know you've wanted—you've wanted for years to finish with me, to wipe me out. You've failed ; but—but still, at the cost of a life. Explain to her, Brownlow, please. Tell her. It's beyond me. I can't.'

CHAPTER XL.

AND so for the second time, on this strange Sunday evening, I was called on to recount what I had heard and seen in the sad, blood-stained little house down at Chelsea. And having done so, I withdrew, Hartover making no effort to detain me. For I felt, and I think he felt also, whatever remained to be said must be said behind closed doors, since it would be both unworthy and impolitic to subject this proud woman and great lady to further mortification. I left the two alone, the more willingly as the boy had proved himself, kept his head, kept his temper, shown himself at once astute and fearless. I could trust him to strike a bargain—for, as he said, between himself and her ladyship a bargain, and a hard one, it henceforth must be—discreditable neither to honour nor to justice. I could trust him not to be vindictive. He had not been so towards Féodore. He would not be so towards his step-mother.

I went downstairs and into the dining-room again, where I found William still making a pretence of clearing the table, though it was close on midnight.

‘ His lordship ate no dinner to call a dinner, sir,’ he said tentatively ; ‘ and after travelling all day too ! ’

But I refused to be drawn. William’s curiosity would, in all probability, be satisfied by the contents of the morning papers ; and meanwhile I, unused to such strenuous demands upon my imagination and nervous energy, stood sorely in need of some rest.

Finding me a hopeless subject, the faithful fellow, to my relief, departed, permitting me to meditate undisturbed.—What of the future, Hartover’s future ? He had borne himself well and manfully throughout the evening ; but would the events, now so deeply affecting him, make more than a passing impression ? Would he, a few months hence, return to his former unprofitable ways ? Would the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, the pride of life prove too strong after all, and work the undoing of this modern Alcibiades ? And what of my own future ? Should I go back to the untroubled scholarly life of Cambridge to live and die a college don ? Or, supposing he and I continued, in some sort, our renewed intimacy of these last few days, had I the strength and wisdom to guide him ? Were we quite at one, moreover, Hartover

and I, or had Halidane succeeded in sowing discord, a suspicion which would remain and rankle in the dear boy's mind ?

My thoughts were far from cheerful as I sat there alone, the great house quiet within, and London hushed to midnight stillness without. Would good come out of all this evil upon which, shrinking and aghast, I had so lately looked ? Deeper question yet—is it possible that evil ever can breed good ? And my thought wandered homeless through labyrinths of speculation regarding dualism, that apparently eternal inter-relation, inter-action of evil and of good, as manifested in nature, in history, in national and personal character, alike. Is there, verily, no good without alloy of evil, no evil lacking a strain of good ? I thought of Fédore, as an example, at once befriending and devouring Hartover—whereby this mystery of dualism appeared painfully deepened and increased.

But then—unable, I suppose, to support the sorrow of its own homelessness any longer—my thought turned to the sheltered corner of the garden at Westrea—where the high red-brick wall forms an angle with the mellow red-brick house front—to which, in the sweet May mornings, the neat box-edged borders gay with spring flowers, the brimming water, the avenue of oaks and the pasture gently sloping upward to the sky-line, so pleasantly set out before us, Nellie Braithwaite would bring her sewing and I the book from which to read aloud.—Ah ! surely this—this had been wholly without alloy, purely and perfectly good ! I pictured the scene in all its details, felt again the emotions engendered by it, and received comfort to my soul—for—not for very long, alas !

The door opened. Hartover swung in. His face was still drawn and thin, but a spot of colour burned on either cheek and his eyes were extraordinarily bright.

'That's over,' he said. 'It has been damnable, utterly damnable. But it is done with. Now, please God, we start afresh—don't move, Brownlow.'

This as I prepared to rise.

'I must talk,' he went on—' talk to you now while the hot fit is still on me, so that you may register and, later, whip me up if I check or show any sign of running slack. Remind me of—of to-night. I have got what I bargained for—my clear stage and no favour. My stepmother signs a truce, under compulsion of—oh ! yes, I know how ugly it sounds !—compulsion of fear, the fear of exposure and social ruin. If she interferes between me and my

father, he shall be told certain facts. If, after his death, I find she has played tricks with the property, I shall go to law, which will be equivalent to publishing those same facts to all the world. If she keeps faith with me, I will stand by her and do everything in my power to shield her name from scandal and disgrace.—For, Brownlow, those who sold her, as a little more than a child, to a man nearly twice her age, and a weak-brained, dyspeptic valetudinarian at that, did a very cruel thing.—All the same, the Rusher has to vanish. As long as my father lives he shall never darken these doors, or those of Hover, again. That is absolute.'

While he spoke, Hartover roamed up and down the room restlessly, working off his excitement. Now he came and, sitting down on the arm of my chair, laid his hand gently on my shoulder.

'Dear old friend, forgive me,' he said. 'I ought to have known better. It was only for an instant I distrusted you; but I was so knocked about. The road to freedom—for it is freedom, through all this shame and misery, this horror of crime and violence, I recognise that—has been very frightful to tread. Nothing can ever look quite the same again. I am new born, not only to man's estate, but to a new vision and understanding of what I may and will, God helping me—I don't shy at a little bit of piety for once!—do with my life. Only the pains of that new birth have been as the pains of hell, dear old man.'

And here I think the tears came, for the boy's hand went up hastily to his eyes, and he turned away his face—from which I opined it would be some time before he and youth parted company, even yet!

'Gad!' he said, 'I believe I should be thankful never to set eyes on a petticoat again, as long as I live; but,' with a rather weary little laugh, 'I suppose the misogynist attitude of mind won't last, whatever else does! Look here, Brownlow, how soon can you be ready to go up to Hover with me? I hear the grouse promise well this season, and I'll be hanged if Colonel Jack puts a ha'porth of shot into a solitary one of them. And, oh! dear me, I want to get away from London, away to the clean wind and the open moors and—forget.'

I took no reading party to North Wales that summer, but rode Warcop's horses and tramped the fells with Hartover instead. And when I went back to Cambridge at the beginning of the October term, the boy—having sent in his papers on his twenty-first birth-

day—went back with me, thus carrying out his old wish of passing at least one year at the university.

And Marsigli never came to trial, but died by his own hand in gaol, to Lady Longmoor's immense relief, as I imagine; but to Detective Inspector Lavender's immense disgust and discouragement of belief in his luck.

'The authorities may ignore it, sir,' he said to me; 'but I can't. That affair hammered more nails into the coffin of my professional reputation, or ought to have done so if every man had his deserts, than I care to count.'

CHAPTER XLI.

LITTLE further remains to be told. The story of my life, that is of its more interesting and critical portion, which I began to write in the long summer mornings when hay harvest kept more than half the parish busy in the fields, has occupied my leisure hours until now, when the first December snow showers fling a glittering mantle about royal Hover, rising there across the valley amid the domes and spires of the mighty pines.

And, as the record nears completion, the question comes, what shall be done with it? Shall I lock it away with other treasured sacred things—a few letters, one or two faded portraits (early examples of the photographer's doubtfully flattering art), a woman's glove, too, and a tag of once white ribbon foxed by age—a little hoard to be burned unlooked on when the peaceful churchyard, here close at hand, receives the baser part of me, and my soul goes back to God who gave it? Or, when that time comes, undreaded yet uncraved for—since life still is sweet—shall this record pass into the hands of her who has been its chief inspiration, the Laura, worthy of how far more melodious a Petrarch, the Beatrice, worthy of how far more eloquent a Dante, than my obscure and humble self? Is it mere weakness, outcome of an old man's doting and futile vanity, clutching at the shadow where the substance is, and always had been, beyond his grasp, which makes me thus desire—when revelation can no longer bring heartburnings or disquiet—those wise and glorious eyes should read the secret of my love and of my sacrifice at last?

Sentimental ? And, after all, why not ? For who am I to condemn sentiment, which, if it contain no corrupt and morbid elements, is surely the strongest driving power towards noble deeds and heroical ventures human history can show ? To decry or fear sentiment is to decry or fear the finest achievements of art, of literature, of romance, I had almost said of religion itself—all that, in short, upon which spirit, as distinct from matter, feeds and thrives.

And this, quite naturally if not quite obviously, brings me back to the year Hartover was up at Cambridge. During the few days I spent there myself, while making my peace with the members of the deserted reading party and, to some extent, with the good Master himself, I contrived to find time for an afternoon at Westrea. Nellie Braithwaite must hear something of all which had lately happened ; yet to inform her by letter appeared to me inadvisable. I did not approve of carrying on any sort of correspondence behind her father's back. I must not raise hopes which might never be realised ; but I might, without indiscretion, let her know Hartover was not only free, but fired, through that same freedom, with liberal ideas and worthy purposes—let her know, further, I had been faithful to my promise, and had thrown in my lot with the dear boy's for good and all, so that nothing short of rejection on his part would make me leave him again.

But I speedily perceived, with mingled shame and admiration, any fear of raising undue hopes was quite uncalled for. I had underrated alike the courage and sensibility of Nellie Braithwaite's nature. For her gladness at my news was veiled by a sweet reserve both of expression and inquiry—assurance of Hartover's well-being bringing all her maidenly dignity into play. Henceforth, as I saw, she would wrap her love about with silence, hiding it even from me, her chosen friend, in delicate yet lofty pride. No finger would she raise to beckon Hartover or recall that early love passage ; while, as I also saw, my presence in future would be less acceptable to her because, from my closeness to Hartover, I formed, in a measure, a link between him and herself.

I left Westrea, on my return journey to Cambridge, somewhat crestfallen. As reward of my zeal in fulfilling—and successfully, moreover—the promise I gave her, was I to be exiled from her confidence ? That seemed arbitrary and, indeed, a little unjust. Whereupon I made a reflection—made how many thousand times already by how many thousands of my sex !—that the ways of

woman, be she pure and noble or, alas ! signally the reverse, are one and all mysterious, past forecasting and past finding out.

And at that I had to leave it. For Hartover, on his part, spoke no word, gave no sign. Hover, the moors, the stables, the kennels, and, as I observed with satisfaction, so much of the varied business of the great property as he could get in touch with, filled his time and mind to the exclusion of all question of—in his own phrase—‘petticoats.’ Was Nellie Braithwaite forgotten then ? Once again I must be stern with myself ; for how should it advantage me even if she was ?

But specially did stables and kennels bulk big among the dear boy’s many interests and occupations during that pleasant long vacation, whereby Warcop was made the happiest of men. For one morning, about a fortnight after our arrival, Hartover threw a letter to me across the breakfast table.

‘Read that,’ he said. ‘The Rusher signs his abdication—gives up the hounds, moves his horses—or what he is pleased to call his—I think I know who has paid for them and their keep for a good dozen years now—and hunts in Leicestershire this winter. My father must not, of course, be worried, so her Magnificence forwards the letter to me. Really, it strikes me as rather pathetic, Brownlow. How are the mighty fallen ! But, pathetic or not, the hounds must be hunted this season or the mouth of our enemy—Bramhall, to wit—will be altogether too extensively enlarged over us.—Oh ! well, if it comes to that, I suppose I can hunt them well enough myself, with Warcop’s help, putting in a day every fortnight or so from Cambridge during term time. I’ll back myself to be a popular master before the end of the winter, though there will be prejudices to live down, no doubt. Gad ! so much the better—*carrière ouverte aux talents*. After all, I can canoodle and coax against most people, you know, and be nine foot high, too, when I like.’

Which was perfectly true. Had I not experience thereof ? I fell in with this idea the more readily since our English institution of fox-hunting plays so large a part in country life, bringing landlord and tenant together on equal terms, and establishing a friendly and wholesome relation invaluable as between class and class. Mastership of the Hover, though infringing somewhat upon the routine of his college work, was in my opinion calculated to prove an excellent introduction to those larger and immensely more

important forms of mastership which, for Hartover, seemed to loom up by no means far ahead.

But creaking gates hang long, the proverb says. And this proved true of the invalid at Bath. The months passed, and yet Lord Longmoor, though increasingly fanciful, increasingly querulous, increasingly a sick man, in truth, still kept a feeble hold of life through autumn, winter, spring, and on into the golden heats of midsummer. The May term again drew to its close, and with it Hartover's sojourn at Cambridge. How had the university affected and influenced him? Chiefly, I believed, as a pause, a place of recovery before further effort. Out of the great world he had come, surfeited by all too heavy a meal—for one of his age—of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Back into the great world, it was ordained, he must return. But he had rested by the way, had slept off the effects, so to speak, of that over-much and evil fruit-eating, had at once steadied and grown younger.

Meanwhile he was the darling of the college; where, from the good Master, through ranks of dons and gownsmen, down to gyps and bed-makers, he was an object of interest and of admiration. And this less from snobbery, the vulgar spirit—too common among us—which 'loves a lord,' than from his own charm and grace and the irresistible way he had with him. The affection he inspired and interest he excited, touched and amused him, when he happened to be conscious of it; but his eyes, so I fancied, were set on something beyond, and as the time of departure drew near I seemed to observe in him a growing preoccupation and restlessness.

And so the anniversary of his hurried journey to find me came round—the anniversary, too, of Féodore's death. Did he remember it, I wondered—remember his torment of suspense and desolation? He never spoke of Féodore, or of the crowded events of those few rather desperate days. The recuperative power of youth is wellnigh unlimited. Was remembrance of them erased from his mind by a natural and healthy process of attrition, or was his silence intentional? Again I wondered.

When he left Cambridge I should go with him, and not for the long vacation merely. But, by the Master's kind advice and permission, I was to retain both my fellowship and my rooms, putting in so much residence in the course of the year as I could manage. Of this I was glad. Not for an instant did I hesitate

to follow Hartover ; but it would, I own, have caused me a keen pang to sever my connection with the university entirely.

All day, on the anniversary of Féodore's death, I had been packing and sorting my now not inconsiderable library, destroying—odious occupation—old letters and papers. While so engaged the thought of Nellie Braithwaite had been curiously, almost oppressively, present to me. Only thrice had I seen her during the past eight or nine months. I should, in all probability, see her even less frequently in future. Yes, Hartover's emancipation, strangely enough, parted us far more effectually than Hartover's wrongdoings or Hartover's troubles ever had. Would she live on, without change of estate or of place, from girlhood to womanhood, womanhood to old age, busied with home and household, and the care of her father, still cherishing the exquisite yet unfruitful love of her youth ? That was a lovely picture, but a sad one. As I destroyed papers, sorted and packed my books, I almost unconsciously placed another picture beside it. For years hence, when the shadows grew long, might it not be possible she would weary of such an existence ? Then, in the twilight, might not my turn come, might not she and I grow old together, dwelling under the same roof, bearing the same name at last ? A lovely picture too—if a little dim and pallid—lovely at least to me. I went on with my sorting and packing, a smile on my lips and grip of not unpleasant pain about my heart.

Went on, until it grew too dark for me to read the names of the books as I took them down off the shelves. I lighted the candles on my study table, using a wax vesta from an old silver box the dear boy had once given me. And, so doing, I recollect ed with a start that, absorbed in my own preparations for departure, I had not seen him all day. The occurrence was so unusual that, realising it, I felt somewhat uneasy. I recollect ed, moreover, that he had not put in an appearance at hall. This increased my uneasiness. I sent round to his rooms, in the big quadrangle, only to learn that he had gone out riding early, taking no groom with him, and leaving no information as to the probable time of his return or as to his destination.

Nine o'clock, half-past nine, ten o'clock struck. Darling of the college or not, at this rate my young lord ran a chance of being ignominiously gated. Uneasiness deepened into anxiety, anxiety into downright alarm.

It was not possible to sit still in this state of suspense any

longer. I went out on to the landing, down my staircase, and half-way across the small court—charming in the warm gloom of the midsummer night, with its tinkling fountain, its squares and oblongs of lamplit window—when footsteps rang out under the archway, and a young man came towards me, not in regulation cap and gown, but high riding boots, white cord breeches, his coat and hat appearing white also, so thickly overlaid were they by dust.

Hartover slipped his arm within mine.

‘That's right,’ he said, with a queer, gay, yet half-shy little laugh. ‘I could have sworn I should find you, every feather on end, clucking after your lost chick ; so I came right on here, without stopping to change or have a brush.’

‘But where have you been, my dear boy ?’ I cried, still agitated, struck, moreover, by a strangeness in his manner. Not that his gaiety was forced. On the contrary, it seemed to bubble up and overflow out of some depth of uncontrollable gladness.

‘Doing the best day's work of my life,’ he answered. ‘But let me come up to your rooms. We can't talk here. And there are things to explain. Good as the day's work is, you still have to put the finishing touch to it. Can't do without you, you see, in good fortune any more than in bad—even if I wanted to, which, God knows, I don't. But forty miles, dear old man, in dust and sun—or nearer fifty, for, like a fool, I lost my way coming back and gandered about for ever so long in those fenlands. Gad ! how enchanting they are though, Brownlow !—The vast reed beds, and great meres like shining mirrors, holding miles of sky in their pretty laps, and the long skeins of wild-fowl rising off them and calling to the sunset. I have never understood the fascination of a flat country before. I must go and have another look at it all some day—some day—because it will speak to me of—’

He broke off. And again he laughed, mounting the dark stairs so rapidly beside me that I had some ado to keep pace with him.

Once inside, he threw hat, gloves, and crop down on the table, blew out the candles, and, crossing the room, lowered himself gingerly on to the window seat.

‘Let's sit in the dark.—Jeshurun ! I am stiff, though !—You don't mind—the dark I mean—do you ? It's more peaceful.’

I minded nothing but delay, for a feverish impatience was upon me.

'Yes,' he went on; 'the finishing touch has to be yours, Brownlow. There's something I want you to do for me, as usual.'

'What?' I asked.

'This: You remember that which happened a year ago to-day?'

His tone changed, sobered. I did remember, and told him so.

'I have waited through a whole year as a penance—a penance self-inflicted in expiation of certain sins. During that year I have lived cleanly.'

And I felt, rather than saw, his eyes fixed on mine—felt, too, that his face flushed.

'I knew perfectly well by waiting I risked losing what I supremely long for. But I accepted that risk as part of my penance—the very heart of it, in fact.'

'Yes,' I murmured, greatly marvelling to what his speech should lead up.

He leaned across and laid his hand on my knee.

'I rode over to Westrea to-day,' he said.

'Westrea? What do you know—how have you heard about Westrea?' I exclaimed.

'From Warcop, when last we were at Hover. I could not say anything to you, Brownlow, because I would not have you involved. The Braithwaites were your friends, and I didn't want, of course, to come between you and them, which could hardly have been avoided if—well, if things had turned out badly for me.'

Again that note of uncontrollable gladness in his voice.

'I felt it would be unfair to ask questions of you, as I could not explain; and the penance had to be completed in full before I could talk of it. But Warcop was different. I had no scruple in finding out from him where they—where she—now lived. And—'

He turned, leaning his elbow on the window-sill, speaking softly, and looking out into the fair windless night.

'I—I have seen her. I have been with her nearly all day. Braithwaite was away, luckily—at Thetford, I believe she told me—at some political meeting. She has not changed, except that she is even more beautiful than I remembered. And she loves me. She will marry me, when her father gives his consent.'

A minute or more of silence, for I could not bring myself to speak. But, absorbed as Hartover was in his own joy, he failed

to notice it, I think. Presently he faced round, and once more I felt his eyes fixed on mine.

'And this is where your good offices come in, dear old man,' he went on. 'Of course I shall go to Braithwaite myself, and ask for her hand with all due form and ceremony. But I want you to see or write to him too, and back me up. Tell him I'm not the young rake and wastrel he probably imagines me to be—and which—well—I once was. Tell him he needn't be afraid to trust her to me; for I know the world pretty thoroughly by now, and still find her the noblest and most precious thing in it. Tell him,'—and he laughed a little naughtily—'he may just as well give in first as last, for have her I will, if I'm obliged to kidnap her, carry her off without with your leave or by your leave. Nothing will stop me short of death; so he'd best accept the inevitable. I am perfectly aware I belong to a class he'd like to exterminate—that he regards me as an absurd anachronism, a poisonous blotch on the body politic. But, as I was explaining to her to day, I can't help being who I am. This, anyhow, is not my fault.—Ah! and that's so delicious about her, Brownlow!—Just what has made other women keen to catch me, actually stands in my way with her. She doesn't care a row of pins, I verily believe, for money, or rank, or titles. It is I, myself, she loves, not what I can give her. Quaint, you know, after two or three seasons of London mothers with daughters on hand for sale—it strikes one as quaint, but, good Lord, how mighty refreshing!'

Again he leaned his elbow on the window-sill, turning his head. I could just make out the line of his profile, the lips parted in something between a sigh and laughter.

'She's so clever, too—so splendidly awake. Picture the endless delight of showing her beautiful things, new and beautiful places! And she is so well read—far better read than I. That's very much thanks to you, Brownlow. She spoke of you so sweetly, and of the comfort and help your friendship had been to her. I'm very grateful; though, upon my word, I came deucedly near being jealous once or twice, and inclined to think she praised you a wee bit too highly. But, joking apart, dear old man, you will see Braithwaite and give me a good character?'

He rose as he spoke. It was time. I could not have endured much longer. For I had been racked if ever man had—each sentence of Hartover's—merry, serious, teasing, eloquent, tender—an added turn of the screw under which muscles parted and sinews

snapped. How thankful I was to the merciful darkness which hid me! My voice I could, to some extent, command, but by my looks I must have been betrayed.

Hartover felt the way across to the table, picked up his hat, gloves, and crop. Mechanically I rose too, and followed him out on to the landing.

'The sooner the better,' he said slyly. 'Think how long I've waited! I ascertained Braithwaite will be at home all day. Couldn't you go to-morrow?'

'If I can get a conveyance,' I answered.

'There are my horses.'

But twenty miles' ride out, and twenty back, with such an interview in the interval, was, I felt, beyond my strength.

'Oh! well; leave it to me, then. I'll arrange,' the boy said, 'if you'll let me. Good-night, Brownlow, and God bless you! You're the dearest and best friend living.'

He ran down the dark stairs, and swung across the little court. I listened, till the sound of his footsteps died out under the archway, and went back, shutting and locking both doors behind me. Then came the blackest hour of my life—worse than the racking—wherein I fought, in solitude, with the seven devils of envy, hatred, and malice, the devil of loneliness too; with the natural animal man in me, and with visions—almost concrete in their vividness and intensity—of what Nellie's love must and would surely be to him on whom she bestowed it.

Of the following day I retain a strange memory, as of something unreal and phantasmal. I believe I looked much as usual, talked as usual, behaved in a reasonable and normal manner. But my speech and action were alike mechanical. My brain worked, my material and physical brain, that is; but for the time being soul and heart were dead in me. I felt no emotion, felt nothing, indeed, save a dumb ache of longing the day were over and I free to rest.

For I drove out to Westrea, of course. How could I do otherwise? True to his word, Hartover had made all necessary arrangement, as he sent word to me early. At the same time he sent round a note, with the request I would deliver it to Nellie—of which more hereafter. I found Braithwaite at home and greatly perturbed in mind; for, like the fearless and honourable being she was, Nellie had already told him both the fact and purpose of Hartover's visit.

'I know what brings you here, Brownlow,' he said, as he met

me in the porch. 'And I could wish you a worthier errand. I confess I am very sore. I flattered myself this mad project had received its quietus long ago. I object to it as strongly as I ever objected, and for the same reasons. Such a marriage is equally contrary to my wishes and my convictions. Permitting it, I, having preached to others, should indeed become myself a castaway. What will those who share my views as to the iniquity of the aristocratic, the feudal system—which strangles the independence and stunts the moral and material growth of three-fifths of, so-called, free Englishmen—think of me, when they find me throwing principle to the winds for the vulgar satisfaction of seeing my daughter a countess ? '

This, and much more to the same effect, weighted by sufficient substratum of truth to render it difficult to combat. Not only natural and genuine fear for Nellie's future happiness, but all his native obstinacy was aroused. In vain, as it seemed, I pleaded the change in Hartover, the seriousness of his purpose, the depths of his affection, his growing sense of responsibility. In vain, too, I made a clean breast of certain family matters, spoke of Féodore's unscrupulous pursuit, her ladyship's complicity, and of the intrigues which had surrounded Hartover, as I feared, from childhood.

'Granted all you say,' he answered. 'Granted the young man's reformation is sincere and promises to be lasting, can you honestly advise me, my dear Brownlow, to let my daughter become part and parcel of a society thus permeated by low scheming and, on your own showing, by downright immorality ? You are actuated by a fantastic and chivalrous devotion to this handsome young princeling, which blinds you to facts. Sensible fellow though you are, he has dazzled and bewitched you, just as he dazzles and bewitches my poor Nellie. But having an honest and deep-seated objection to anything in the shape of princelings, I retain my clearness of eyesight, and am actuated by common sense and prudence regarding the safety of my daughter.'

'At the cost of breaking her heart ? ' I rather warily ventured.

Whereupon we started to argue the whole question over again. While thus engaged we had sauntered to the door of the pleasant low-ceilinged living-room opening on to the garden, which, brilliant in colour, rich with the scent of sweet-briar and syringa, of borders thick-set with pinks, sweet-williams and roses, basked between its high red walls in the still afternoon sunshine. On the threshold Braithwaite turned to me, saying almost bitterly :

'Ah! Brownlow, I am disappointed. Why couldn't you speak for yourself, man? How willingly would I have given her to you, had you asked me! Often have I hoped, since you stayed under my roof at Easter year, it might eventually come to that.'

Well for me I had been racked and devil-hunted last night till emotion was dead in me!

'Why have I never spoken for myself? Because—well—look at Nellie. There is your answer.'

And I pointed to the upward sloping pasture. Now I divined the contents of that note which the boy had confided to me for delivery. I was not only his ambassador, but his despatch rider. My mission hardly unfolded, he followed daringly close behind.

For down across the turf walked Hartover leading his horse, hat in hand. Beside him, in blue-sprigged muslin gown and lilac sun-bonnet, walked Nellie. As we stepped out of the doorway she caught sight of us, and the sound of her voice came in soft but rapid speech. The young man, whose head inclined towards her, looked up and gallantly waved his hat. They reached the bottom of the slope, and as they stood side by side on the bank, the great brown hunter, extending its neck, snuffed the coolth off the water. Only the brimming stream and bright garden lay between them and us.

'Mr. Braithwaite,' Hartover called, 'shall I be forced to run away with her? Time and place favour it; and, Gad! sir, my horse has plenty left in him yet.'

He slipped his arm round the girl's waist and made a feint of tossing her on to the saddle.

'Confound the fellow's impudence!' Braithwaite growled, as he moved back into the house.

But his eyes were wet. He was beaten. Youth and love had won the day, and he knew it.

Thus came the end, or rather the beginning. For the end—as I look across the valley this morning at royal Hover, wrapped in that glittering mantle of new-fallen snow—is not, please God, for a long time yet.

Still, in point of fact, Nellie Braithwaite never became Lady Hartover. For Braithwaite exacted an interval of six months before the wedding; and before those same six months were out the poor creaking gate, away at Bath, had creaked itself finally out of earthly existence, and into—let us charitably hope—a more profitable heavenly one; while—such after all is the smooth

working of our aristocratic and hereditary system, with its *le roi est mort, vive le roi*—over his great possessions his son, my always very dear, and sometime very naughty, pupil, reigned in his stead.

As to myself, Cambridge and Hover, Hover and Cambridge, till, the home living falling vacant, I removed myself and my books here to this pleasant parsonage, where learned and unlearned, gentle and simple, young and old, are good enough to come and visit me, and confide to me their hopes, and joys, disappointments, sorrows, and sometimes—poor souls—their sins.

THE END.

THE TERCENTENARY OF RICHARD HAKLUYT.

November 23, 1616.

THERE is nothing more essentially English than the passion for adventure and exploration, for seeing and colonising the world. It is a strange passion : it leads men to leave the fair and comfortable villages, the meadow-lands and sheltering woods to which they were born, for desolation and strange seas, to exchange the temperate airs of England for the rigours of Arctic nights and the burning of tropic mornings, to give up security and good living for starvation and hardship, for death by thirst or famine, or the cruelties of 'salvages.' Yet to this call of the blood few Englishmen turn an utterly deaf ear—for century after century, and generation after generation, they have followed the call and strewed their bones about the world, while those who came home again simply inflamed others to follow their adventuring footsteps.

We look upon the Elizabethan age as our perfect flowering time in poetry and drama and the courtly arts. We know, moreover, how in that reign our seamen first fully realised themselves, and one of the greatest among them accomplished his fruitful circumnavigation of the globe. It is singularly fitting, therefore, that such a time should have produced the man who realised the epic quality of the voyagings and travels done in his day and in times past, and who dedicated his life to setting down some worthy record of those things. That man was Richard Hakluyt—or Hacklewit, as his name was commonly pronounced and often spelt by his contemporaries, and that spelling gives it a native English look more in keeping with his nature than the accepted form. Three hundred years ago, in November 1616, the same year as Shakespeare, he died, bequeathing to posterity the work of his life in that noble book called by him 'The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques and Discoveries of the English Nation, made by Sea or Overland to the Remote and furthest Distant Quarters of the Earth at any time within the Compasse of these 1600 Yeares.'

Such a work grew from no common inspiration ; it was not compiled, as many later 'monumental' works have been, from other men's researches : it was part of the very fabric of his life. He spent laborious days and nights, he gave long patient years to his self-

imposed task, he studied and he travelled, he talked with living men and inquired of the works of dead ones ; all knowledge was his province, so that it bore on his great subject. It is doubtful if the annals of literature can show a more passionate and more persistent devotion. As Hakluyt himself said to 'The Reader' in the second edition of his 'Voyages' :

' For the bringing of which into this homely and rough-hewen shape, which here thou seest ; what restlesse nights, what painefull dayes, what heat, what cold I have endured ; how many long and chargeable journeys I have travelled ; how many famous libraries I have searched into ; what varieties of ancient and moderne writers I have perused ; what a number of old records, patents, privileges, letters, etc., I have redeemed from obscuritie and perishing ; into how manifold acquaintance I have entered ; what expenses I have not spared ; and yet what opportunities of private gaine, preferment, and ease I have neglected ; albeit thyselfe canst hardly imagine, yet I by daily experience do finde and feele ; and some of my entier friends can sufficiently testifie. Howbeit (as I told thee at the first) the honour and benefits of this Common weale wherein I live and breathe hath made all difficulties seeme easie, all paines and industrie pleasant, and all expenses of light value and moment unto me.'

The records of his life are scanty : that autobiographical passage, and one other, are almost all he tells us about himself. He was content with personal obscurity so long as his work was accomplished. It is significant that, although buried in Westminster Abbey, the place of his grave is not known, nor is any portrait of him believed to be in existence. He called himself simply Richard Hakluyt, Preacher, and though he meant that in the clerical sense which was his profession, we may give it another meaning as well, for he was Preacher of Empire to England, and of the splendid words of *Ecclesiasticus*, ' Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers that begat us.'

His life story is singularly complete and quite undeviating in aim. The great object for which he was to work was revealed to him early, and cannot be better told than in the grave simplicity of his own words, in his 'Epistle Dedicatore' to Sir Francis Walsingham :

' I do remember that being a youth, and one of Her Majestie's scholars at Westminster that fruitfull nurserie, it was my happy to visit the chamber of Mr. Richard Hakluyt my cosin, a Gentleman

of the Middle Temple, well knownen unto you, at a time when I found lying open upon his boord certeine bookees of Cosmographie, with an universall Mappe: he seeing me somewhat curious in the view thereof, began to instruct my ignorance, by shewing me the division of the Earth into three parts after the olde account, and then according to the latter, and better distribution, into more: he pointed with his wand to all the knowne Seas, Gulfs, Bayes, Straights, Capes, Rivers, Empires, Kingdomes, Dukedomes, and Territories of each part, with declaration also of their speciall commodities, and particular wants, which by the benefit of traffike, and entercourse of merchants, are plentifully supplied. From the Mappe he brought me to the Bible, and turning to the 107 Psalm, directed me to the 23 and 24 verses, where I read, that they which go downe to the sea in ships, and occupy by the great waters, they see the works of the Lord, and his woonders in the deepe, etc. which words of the Prophet together with my cousins discourse (things of high and rare delight to my young nature) tooke in me so deepe an impression, that I constantly resolved, if ever I were preferred to the University, where better time, and more convenient place might be ministered for these studies, I would by God's assistance prosecute that knowledge and kinde of literature, the doores whereof (after a sort) were so happily opened before me.'

It was a true vocation the young Hakluyt had found, and he faithfully followed it all the days of his life. He took his degree as Master of Arts at Oxford in 1577, having learned five languages for the sake of his maritime inquiries; and then lectured 'in the common schools,' demonstrating the advances of geography—in his own attractive words, he 'had waded on still farther and farther in the sweet studie of the historie of Cosmographie.' His first book appeared in 1582, dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, and called 'Divers voyages touching the discoverie of America and the Ilands adjacent unto the same, made first of all by our Englishmen.'

Hakluyt was convinced, as he set forth in his book, that for the future development of exploration and 'plantation' (as colonisation was called in those days) by the English, our principal necessity was a good system of education in nautical affairs. This need he continued to urge upon men of influence throughout his life; to Lord Howard of Effingham, the year after the Armada, he wrote ('as being the father and principall favourer of the English Navigation'), pointing out—

'the meanes of breeding up of skilfull sea-men and mariners in this Realme. Sithence your Lordship is not ignorant,' he continued,

'that ships are to little purpose without skilfull sea-men ; and since sea-men are not bred up to perfection of skill in much less time (as it is said) than in the time of two prentiships ; and since no kinde of men of any profession in the common wealth passe their yeres in so great and continuall hazard of life ; and since of so many, so few grow to gray heires : how needfull it is, that by way of Lectures and such like instructions, these ought to have a better education, than hitherto they have had : all wise men may easily judge. When I call to minde, how many noble ships have bene lost, how many worthy persons have bene drenched in the sea, and how greatly this Realme hath bene impoverished by losse of great Ordinance and other rich Commodities through the ignorance of Our Sea-men, I have greatly wished there were a Lecture of Navigation read in this Cittie, for the banishing of our former grosse ignorance in Marine Causes, and for the increase and generall multiplying of the sea-knowledge in this age, wherein God has raised so generall a desire in the youth of this Realme to discover all parts of the face of the earth, to this Realme in former ages not knownen.'

To the advancing of navigation, which he justly called 'the very walls of this our Island,' he was most anxious that a lectureship should be established 'in London or about Ratcliffe.' Sir Francis Drake shared this wish, and offered twenty pounds a year towards its support, but as another twenty was needed and no one offered it, Hakluyt's dream of the training of the complete navigator came to naught. Perhaps it was not so much needed as he thought in his anxious care, for during the whole of Elizabeth's reign only one dockyard-built ship, the small *Lion's Whelp*, was lost by stress of weather or grounding, while English ships weathered gales in which whole Spanish fleets foundered at sea. But Hakluyt's desire was fundamentally a sound one, for in those early days when science was in its infancy, and tradition and rule-of-thumb the only guide, his mind reached forward to the value of technical training. Another matter in which he was in advance of his time was his concern in the 'curing of hot diseases,' wherein he had a far-off vision of our modern schools of Tropical Medicine. Hakluyt's 'industry,' which indeed was on a colossal scale, was much commended by his contemporaries, but while doing full homage to that unflagging zeal, we perceive other qualities which engage our affection as industry alone could not do. No one can read his beautiful dedications and prefaces without being touched by his ardour, the freshness of his enthusiasm for all that pertains to the sea-greatness of

England, which he both recorded and foresaw. The splendid fervour of Elizabethan poetry is in them. He gives to his great book all the riches of his mind, and regards the achievements it chronicles with a most passionate pride. He tells the reader that 'it remaineth that thou take the profits and pleasure of the worke : which I wish to bee as great to thee, as my paines and labour have bene in bringing these raw fruits unto this ripeness, and in reducing these loose papers into this order.' To him 'Geographie and Chronologie' are 'the Sunne and the Moone, the right eye and the left of all history,' and all history is but the 'prologue to the omen coming on' of English greatness at sea. He sees the unknown regions of the globe as the scene, past and to come, of that great drama of exploration where our seamen by their 'high heart and manly resolution' were to win new lands for England by 'their high courage and singular activity.' In seas uncharted, in a world imperfectly known and full of fantastic terrors, he yet believed that

'Where the dishevelled ghastly sea-nymph sings,
Our well-rigged ships shall stretch their swelling wings,'

and he desired, as might be expected from his thoroughness, not only to write of those things, but to experience them. He planned to accompany Drake's West Indies voyage of 1585, and Sir Humphrey Gilbert's fatal one in 1583, but happily some unknown cause prevented his embarking with Gilbert. England could ill have spared him with his great task unaccomplished.

In 1589, the year after the defeat of the Armada, the fruit of his labours appeared in the first edition in one folio volume of 'The Principal Navigations.' After another ten years of labour the second and final edition in three folio volumes was published in 1598-1600. When that work appeared he might justly have said with Drake, 'I am the man I have promised to be.' He had accomplished the toil he had set himself, and doing so produced a work which is nearer being the epic of the English people than any other book we have. Every activity of his busy life was made to serve that central purpose. He went abroad, he lived for five years in France as chaplain to Queen Elizabeth's Ambassador; he gained ecclesiastical preferment, becoming prebendary of Bristol, rector of Wetheringsett in Suffolk, archdeacon of Westminster, and Chaplain of the Savoy. He married, he had a son—but all these things are shadowy to us: Hakluyt is the chronicler of the 'Voyages,' the mouthpiece of Elizabethan England at sea, and as

such he would wish that we remembered him. Drayton showed the responsiveness of his contemporaries when he sang :

‘Thy voyages attend
Industrious Hackluit,
Whose reading shall inflame
Men to seek fame
And much commend
To after times thy wit.’

We do not feel that Hakluyt cared greatly about commanding to after times his wit, but that his book should inflame ‘men to seek fame’ was its very object and purpose. He lived in the age of exploration and great attempts ; Englishmen were just fully awakening to their heritage, and determined no longer to be fore-stalled by the Spaniards and Portuguese in the adventure of the globe. The regions left them to explore were more dangerous and difficult than what Hakluyt calls ‘the mild, lightsome, temperate, and warm Atlantic Ocean, over which the Spaniards and Portugals have made so many pleasant, prosperous and golden voyages.’ But from the rigours of harsh latitudes they won their fame and their hardihood. We love Hakluyt’s gorgeous Elizabethan pride when he speaks favourably of the Northern voyages of the Dutch, but ‘with this proviso ; that our English nation led them the dance, brake the yee before them, and gave them good leave to light their candle at our torch.’

What a father he was to his seamen, how he rejoiced in their triumphs, sympathised in their afflictions, and understood their ‘sea-sorrows’ ! Many and bitter are those sorrows, as recorded in his ‘Voyages,’ and the men of that day, many of whom had known the savagery of Spain, and all of whom had lived through the coming of the ‘Invincible Armada,’ would thrill to the grand Biblical opening of that poignant narrative of John Hartop, ‘Man being born of a Woman, living a short time is replenished with many miseries, which some know by reading of histories, many by the view of others’ calamities, and I by experience.’

‘I by experience’—that is the very voice of Hakluyt’s ‘Voyages,’ its unique and authentic value, the quality which makes it no book but a living document of the English people. In his labour to make it that Hakluyt drew to himself all he needed, from the humble and from the great. He tells us how many ‘virtuous gentlemen’ helped him, and gives us a galaxy of great Elizabethan

names—Sir John Hawkins (who knew something of 'sea-sorrows,' for when he returned from his West Indies voyage he said to Walsingham, 'If I should write of all our calamities I am sure a volume as great as the Bible will scarce suffice'), Sir Walter Ralegh, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Francis Walsingham, Lord Howard of Effingham, the Lord Treasurer Burghley, Sir Robert Cecil, foreign cosmographers and scholars like Mercator, Ortelius, and Thevet, were his friends and correspondents. He valued them all, and not less did he value each humble sailor he came across, such as Mr. Jennings and Mr. Smith, 'the master and master's mate of the ship called the *Toby*, belonging to Bristol,' or a nameless seaman, 'One of mine acquaintance of Ratcliffe.' He travelled two hundred miles on horseback to speak with one Thomas Buts, the sole survivor of a Labrador voyage. From the lips of all he learned, and nothing was insignificant to him if it bore upon the sea or far countries or the restless adventures and heroisms of the men of his race. It is the story of the travels of individual men, he truly says, which brings us to a full knowledge of the world, 'not those weary volumes bearing the titles of Universal Cosmography, which some men that I could name have published as their own.' It came too late for inclusion in his book; but how he would appreciate the saying of Sir Henry Middleton when the Red Sea was 'discovered' (a hundred years after the Portuguese discovered it), and the Turks claimed it as a close sea. 'To come into this sea,' Middleton answered splendidly, 'I needed no leave but God's and my King's,' and followed up his answer with cannon shot. Hakluyt, like most passionate pioneers of Empire, lacked the humour that was Shakespeare's: 'Master,' says one of the fishermen in *Pericles*, 'I marvel how the fishes live in the sea,' and was answered: 'Why, as men do a-land; the great ones eat up the little ones.' The gravity of a great purpose is seldom seasoned with humour, and more to Hakluyt's liking than Shakespeare's jest would have been the thought of Samuel Daniel:

'And who, in time, knows whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue? to what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent
To enrich unknowing nations with our stores?'

He was filled with a spacious philanthropy to the unknown world, and would bestow on it the benefits of our tongue and our laws. His gentleness and wisdom did not fail him even on the

thorny question of the propagation of the Christian religion among the 'salvages' of the Indies :

'The means,' he says, 'to send such as shall labour effectually in this business is, by planting one or two colonies of our nation upon that firm [mainland] where they may remain in safety and first learn the language of the people near adjoining (the gift of tongues being now taken away) and by little and little acquaint themselves with their manners, and so with discretion and mildness distill into their purged minds the sweet and lively liquor of the gospel.'

His sagacity and good judgment is shown by the way in which he dealt with and arranged the enormous mass of material he accumulated. The wild and fantastic methods of some Elizabethan historians were not to his mind : he launched not out into a Universal History of the World on Ralegh's plan, and by his very restraint and the value of his material produced a book which will live as long as the English language, while Ralegh's ambitious effort has gone to dust, which weighs light in the balance compared with the jewelled lines of his lyric, 'If all the world and love were young.' Hakluyt shirks none of the pedestrian necessities of his task : he carefully records the name of the historian of each voyage, as well as the name of the voyager, so that every man may 'answer for himself, justify his reports, and stand accountable for his own doings.' Moreover, he exercises a stern supervision over the superfluous—a necessity if he was to get as many voyages and as much information as possible into the compass of his volumes, for as Professor Walter Raleigh says in his inspiring Introductory Essay to Maclehouse's edition of Hakluyt, 'It was the habit of his age to begin even a nautical diary with a few remarks on the origin of the world, the history of man, and the opinions of Plato.' Delightful though such remarks would now be to the student of Elizabethan literature, Hakluyt had little use for them. He had a stern, a great, and a practical intent in compiling his 'Principal Navigations,' and a far better thing to him than literary graces would be the knowledge that the profits of the East India Company were increased by £20,000 through the study of his book. He classified and arranged his voyages in three series : first the voyages to the South and South-East ; then the North-Eastern voyages ; and last the voyages to the West, 'those rare, delightfull and profitable histories,' and 'the beginnings and proceeding of the two English Colonies planted in Virginia,' of which Ralegh said, 'I shall yet live to see it an English nation.'

Such, in rough outline, is that great work of his, which perhaps might justly represent us to the world, with the Plays of Shakespeare, in the two aspects of which we are most proud, our seamanship and our poetry, were two books only to be taken from our literature. Shakespeare and Hakluyt, who by a singular coincidence both died in the same year, make together an epitome of the English people. In a large number of cases they share the fate of classics, especially classics on the great scale, and are 'taken as read.' But no matter: their thought and their passion, different though they are in degree, have permeated the very marrow of our minds, we absorb them unconsciously simply because we are English. The most unlettered seaman is a 'pilgrim' of Hakluyt's and an embodiment of his hopes; the most casual or most glorious Englishman is a type of Shakespeare's, and to be found in that 'universal gallery' of his plays. In Hakluyt we enjoy the English combination of the poetic and the practical, and delight in his shrewdness and his pure enthusiasm.

He set out to prove, in a partially discovered world, that in the splendid saying of an earlier Englishman, Robert Thorne, 'There is no land uninhabitable, nor sea innavigable.' That might be the motto of his book; while as to him and all the seamen he fathered and gloried in we may take the delightful words of Fuller and see them as 'bound for no other harbour but the Port of Honour, though touching at the Port of Profit in passage thareunto.'

E. HALLAM MOORHOUSE.

THE OLD CONTEMPTIBLES : FIGHTING STRENGTH.

BY BOYD CABLE.

THE fighting strength of the three batteries of a Brigade of Field Artillery, at the time of the First Expeditionaries, totalled 18 guns, 18 officers, and about 650 non-commissioned officers and men. You might remember those figures, or when you have finished the reading of this tale just refer back to them.

The Brigade was posted before the action opened in a corn-field which lay on the banks of a canal, and the guns were 'concealed' behind some of the innocent-looking stooks of cut corn which were ranged in rows along the field. It was the Brigade's first action, and every officer and man waited with expectant eagerness for the appearance of the enemy. On the other side of the canal there was a wide stretch of open ground, but to the gunners it appeared too good to be true that the enemy would advance across that open and give the guns a chance of sweeping them off the earth with shrapnel. At some points tongues and spurs of thick wood ran out towards the canal, and it was rather through and under cover of the trees that the artillerymen expected the enemy to try to press in on the front which ran roughly along the line of the canal. Such an advance would not give the guns so visible and open a target for so long a time ; but, on the other hand, there was still an open space between the nearest parts of the woods and the canal bank, and if the attack were confined to the approaches through the woods it meant that the guns could concentrate on a much narrower front, and there was never a gunner of them there but believed his own battery alone, much less the whole Brigade, capable of smashing up any attempt to debouch from the woods and of obliterating any force that tried it. Nevertheless, all their training and teaching and manœuvres and field-days of peace times indicated the woods as the likeliest points of attack, because it had been an accepted rule laid down in peace—and there were plenty of men in the batteries who remembered the same and very much sterner rule laid down in the South African War—that infantry could not, across the open, attack entrenched positions held by infantry and covered by artillery.

On the whole, the Brigade were very well satisfied with the look

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of things, and having taken careful ranges to the different points of the probable targets, with special attention to the wood edges, uncapped a goodly number of fuzes, given a last look to the mechanism of guns and gear, put some finishing touches to the cunning arrangement of corn stocks, they lit pipes and cigarettes and settled down comfortably to wait developments.

The developments came rapidly, but being at first more or less after the expected routine as laid down in their teaching, the Brigade were not unduly disturbed. The first fire of the enemy artillery was, as far as the Brigade could see, not particularly well aimed, and although it made a great deal of noise and smoke appeared to be doing little harm to the infantry trenches, and none to the artillery behind them. Presently the men watched with great interest, but little realisation of its significance, a grey dove-winged shape that droned up out of the distance across the line, swung round and began a careful patrol along its length. But after that the shells commenced to find the infantry trenches with great accuracy, and to pour a tremendous fire upon them. The Brigade listened and watched frowningly at first, and with growing anger and fidgetings, the screaming and crashing of the German shells, the black and white clouds of smoke that sprang so quickly up and down the infantry lines before them. They were at last given orders to fire, and although at first they were firing at an invisible target, the gunners brisked up and went about their business with great cheerfulness. All along the line the other British batteries were opening with a most heartening uproar that for the time filled the ear and gave the impression that our guns were dominating the situation. That, unfortunately, did not last long. The German rate and weight of fire increased rapidly, until it reached the most awe-inspiring proportions, and it began to look as if the British infantry were to be smothered by shell-fire, were to be blown piecemeal out of their scanty trenches, without being given a chance to hit back.

The Artillery Brigade whose particular fortunes we are following had, up to now, escaped quite lightly with nothing more than a few slight casualties from chance splinters of high-explosive shells that had burst some distance from them.

But suddenly the gunners were aware of a strange and terrifying sound rising above the thunder-claps of their own guns, the diminishing whinny of their own departing shells, the long roll of gun-fire on their flanks, the sharp tearing crashes of the enemy shell-bursts--

a sound that grew louder and louder, rose from the hissing rush of a fast-running river to a fiercer, harsher note, a screaming vibrating roar that seemed to fill the earth and air and sky, that drowned the senses and held the men staring in amazement and anticipation of they knew not what. Then when the wild whirlwind of sound had reached a pitch beyond which it seemed impossible for it to rise, it broke in a terrific rolling c-r-r-r-ash that set the solid earth rocking. One battery was hidden from the other two by a writhing pall of thick black smoke, out of which whirled clods of earth, stones, and a flying cloud of yellow straw. When the smoke dissolved, and the dust and straw and chaff had settled, the other two batteries could see a gun of the third overturned, the gunners rolling or limping or lying still about it, an odd man here and there staggering from the other guns—but all the rest of the gunners in their proper and appointed places, the five remaining guns firing one by one in turn as regularly as if on a peace practice. The Brigade had been introduced to something quite new to it, and that it certainly never expected to meet in open field of battle—a high-explosive shell from one of the heaviest German pieces. But unexpected as it was, more terrible than the gunners had ever imagined, there was no time now to think about such things. The German infantry attack was advancing under cover of their artillery, a crackling roll of rifle fire was breaking out from the infantry trenches, sharp orders were shouting along the lines of guns. There was a pause while fuses were set to new times, while fresh aim was taken and new ranges adjusted.

‘Target, infantry advancin’—open sights . . . !’ said one of the gun-layers in repetition of his orders. ‘But where’s the bloomin’ infantry to get my open sights on ?’

‘Where ?’ shouted his Number One, and pointed over the layer’s shoulder as he stood up to look over the gun shield for a wider view. ‘Can’t you see ‘em there ? ’Ave you gone blind ?’

‘That ?’ said the layer, staring hard. ‘Is that infantry ?’ He had been looking for the scattered dots of advancing men that were all his experience had told him to see of an advancing line. He was quite unprepared for the solid grey mass that he actually did see.

‘That’s infantry,’ snapped his sergeant. ‘Did you think it was airyplanes ? Get to it now.’

The layer got to it, and in a few seconds the whole of the Brigade was pouring shells on the advancing mass as fast as the guns could

be served. The Battery commanders had a vague idea that the enemy infantry had made some terrible mistake, had in error exposed themselves in mass in the open. When the guns had brought swift retribution for the mistake the mass would vanish ; but meantime here was the guns' opportunity—opportunity such as no gunner there had ever hoped to have. But when the mass persisted and pushed on in the teeth of the fire that every one knew must be murderous beyond words, the rate of gun-fire was slowed down, and the batteries set themselves deliberately to wipe this audacious infantry out of existence.

But then suddenly it began to look as if it were to be the Brigade that would be wiped out. A number of German guns turned on it, battered it with heavy high-explosive, lashed it with shrapnel, rent and tore and disrupted it with a torrent of light and heavy shells, a scorching whirlwind of fire, with blasts of leaping flame, with storms of splinters and bullets. One after another guns of the Brigade were put out of action, with guns destroyed or overthrown, with ammunition waggons blown up, with gun detachments killed or wounded. Gun by gun the fighting strength of the Brigade waned ; but as each gun went the others increased their rate of fire, strove to maintain the weight of shells that a Brigade should throw. The guns that were destroying them were themselves invisible. To the Brigade there was no movement of men, no tell-tale groups, no betraying flash even, to show where their destroyers were in action. It is true that the Brigade spent no time looking for them, would not have spent a round on them if it had seen them. Its particular job had been plainly indicated to it—to stop the advancing infantry—and it had no time or shells to spare for anything else.

But grimly and stoically though they took their punishment, gamely and desperately though they strove to fulfil their task, it was beyond them. The grey mass was checked and even stopped at times, but it came on again, and at the guns the ranges shortened and shortened, to a thousand yards, to eight, seven, six hundred. After that it was a hopeless fight, so far as this Brigade was concerned. Most of their guns were out of action, their ammunition was nearly all expended, they were under a rifle fire that scoured the guns with whips of steel and lead, that cut down any man who moved from the shelter of his gun's shield. Such guns as were left, such men as could move, continued to fire as best they might at ranges that kept getting still shorter and shorter. No teams

could bring up ammunition waggons, so the rounds were carried up by hand across the bullet-swept field, until there were no more rounds to bring.

Since they were useless there, an attempt was made to bring the guns out of action and back under cover. It failed when after a minute or two half the remaining men had been cut down by bullets, and the commanders saw that nothing could move and live in the open. Then the order was passed to leave the guns and retire the men as best they could. That was at high noon, and for the next two or three hours the gunners tried in ones and twos to run the gauntlet of the fire and get back to cover. Some tried to crawl or to lie prone and wriggle out on their bellies ; others stripped off bandoliers and haversacks and water-bottles, some even their jackets and boots to 'get set' like runners in a hundred-yard dash, crouching in the shelter of the gun shield, leaping out and away in a desperate rush. But crawl or wriggle or run made little odds. Some men went half the distance to safety, a few went three-quarters, one or two to within bare places of cover ; but none escaped, and most went down before they were well clear of the gun. The few that from the first refused sullenly to abandon their guns, that swore amongst themselves to stick it out till dark if necessary and then drag the crippled guns away, came off best in the end because they lay and crouched under the scanty cover the guns gave, and watched the others go out to their deaths. They lay there through the long dragging hours of the afternoon with the bullets hissing and whistling over and past them, with the shells still crumping and crashing down at intervals, with the gun shields and wheels and steel waggon covers ringing and smacking to the impact of bullet and splinter, with one man here and another there jerking convulsively to a fresh wound—his first or his twenty-first as the case might be—groaning or cursing through set teeth, writhing in pain, or lying silent and still with all pain past.

Late in the afternoon there came a lull in the firing and a lessening of the bullet storm, and the order—a very imperative order—was passed for every man who could move to retire from the guns. So the few whole men came away, helping the wounded out as best they could ; and even then they would not come empty-handed, and since they could not bring their guns, and they knew it was a retirement from the position, they stayed to collect the gun fittings, crawling about amongst the disabled pieces and shattered carriages, with the bullets still hissing and snapping about their

ears, throwing dust spurts amongst their feet, whisking and swishing through the scattered corn stooks. They brought away the sights and breech mechanisms and sight- and field-clinometers, and every other fitment they could carry and thought worth having (and in that they were even wiser than they knew, for in those days such things as dial-sights were precious beyond words, and once lost could scarcely be replaced). And laden down under the weight and unhandiness of these things—the breech fittings alone weigh some forty pounds, and make a most unpleasantly awkward thing to carry—the handful of men left in each battery doubled laboriously out across the field and into comparative safety. At the cost of persistent attempts and some more men a gun was also manhandled out.

The battery that had salvaged its gun brought it safely through the Retreat which followed the action. The other batteries had to be content to keep their pitifully scant ranks together and stagger wearily over the long miles of the great Retreat lugging their cumbersome breech-blocks and dial-sights and gun gear with them. They clung at least to these as the outward and visible sign of being Gunners and the remains of Batteries, and they marched and hung together, waiting eagerly and hopefully for the day that would bring new guns to them and reserves to 'make up the strength.'

An unknown General passed them one day where they were halted by the roadside for what one of the gunners facetiously called 'inspection of gun-park an' stores.' And 'just see all the batteries' guns in line an' properly dressed by the right,' he added, with a glance at the one gun left to them.

'What—er—lot is this?' asked the General of the officer who was 'inspecting.'

'The Umpty-Noughth Brigade, Field Artillery, sir,' said the officer; 'Umptieth, Oughtieth, and Iddyith Batteries.' (It may have sounded pathetically ridiculous, but it was no more or less than the bare truth; for it was as units and batteries that these remnants had marched and hung close together, and, given new guns and fresh drafts, they would be batteries and units again. After all, it is the spirit of and as a unit that counts.)

The General looked at the drawn-up ranks of the batteries, the gun detachments represented by two or three men, or by one man, or by an empty gap in the line; he saw the men grey with dust, with torn clothing, with handkerchiefs knotted at the corners replacing lost caps, with puttees and rags wound round blistered

feet—but with shoulders set back, with heads held up and steady eyes looking unwinking to their front. He looked, too, at the one gun, scarred and dented and pitted and pocked with splinter marks and bullet holes, at each little pile of breech-blocks and sights and fittings that lay spread out on handkerchiefs and haversacks and rags in the place of the other guns ; and he noticed that dirty and dusty and dishevelled as the men might be, the gun parts were speckless and dustless, clean and shining with oil.

The General spoke a few curt but very kindly words to the officer quite loud enough for 'the Brigade' to hear, saying he remembered hearing some word of their cutting up and the fine finish they had made to their fight, congratulating them on the spirit that had held them together, wishing them luck, and hoping they would have their new guns before the time came to turn and hit back and begin the advance.

'I hope so, sir,' said the officer simply ; 'and thank you.'

The General saluted gravely and turned to go, but halted a moment to ask a last question. 'How many of you—how many of the Brigade came out of that show ?' he said.

'Only what you see here, sir—one gun, one officer, and fifty-three men,' said the officer.

You may remember what was the full fighting strength of a Field Artillery Brigade ; but you must also remember that there is another sort of 'fighting strength,' greater far than mere numbers, the sort of strength that this poor shattered remnant of a Brigade still held undiminished and unabated—the stoutness of heart, the courage, the spirit that made the old 'Contemptible Little Army' what it was.

PRESS BUREAU : PASSED FOR PUBLICATION.

SQUIRES AND TRADE IN OLDEN TIMES.

WHEN did the idea that trade was derogatory to men of good birth, otherwise the Continental point of view based on a different social structure, creep into England? No writer, so far as I know, has ever attempted an explanation of what suggests a paradox. That it is an alien importation and in conflict with the facts of English life up to a certain period seems indisputable, and all evidence would point to the Hanoverian succession as roughly marking this mysterious change of attitude. Eliminating, and for obvious reasons, the greater and more powerful Houses, the record of most old English families is a contradiction in terms of the rigid but quite logical observance of a Continental *noblesse*. There is about an even chance that sooner or later you tap the root of the family and its fortunes in a woolstapler, a goldsmith, a vintner, an iron-forger, a flockmaster, a haberdasher, or a grocer, and last, but assuredly not least, in a successful lawyer. What is more, we find these worthies seated upon their newly acquired acres with a coat of arms, inherited or acquired, without any apparent consciousness of being upstarts or parvenus. In the modern sense they were probably not so regarded by their longer-seated country neighbours. As the latter's near relations, to say nothing of their collaterals, were themselves largely engaged in trade of some sort or in various avocations assuredly not more aristocratic, such an attitude would be inconceivable!

We all know the modern ideas about such things, and need not waste words over them. Nor is it of any consequence how much they may have modified in the last fifty years. For our point lies in the fact that they could not well have existed at a period to which a popular superstition attributes a rigid and long-lost exclusiveness. The 'very respectable family' of Blankshire in Jane Austen's time undoubtedly looked askance at trade. Yet it seems probable that their own great-great-grandfathers would not even have understood what such an attitude meant. It does seem rather whimsical that the Continental point of view should have established itself in theory, if not altogether in practice, in a country whose landed gentry had not merely intermarried freely with commerce, but in such innumerable instances were themselves the product of it. Nor is this all. For in the sixteenth and seventeenth

centuries their progeny and collaterals were of necessity much engaged in trade, and indeed not seldom in occupations that in these presumably democratic days would be rejected offhand by any one with the least pretension to gentility. The more decorative alternatives to a livelihood, as we should now regard them, either did not exist much before the Georges and the rapid economic developments of the eighteenth century, or were utterly inadequate to the demands of the younger son, when, with smaller properties and larger families, his name was legion.

Scotland and Wales do not come within the scope of these inquiries, for, I trust, obvious reasons. Some Scottish writers, however, have dealt rather frankly with these things and incidentally disclosed to their countrymen the perhaps not always palatable fact that shopkeeping in Edinburgh was once a recognised occupation for persons of family, while as for that quite other Scotland, the Highlands, tavern-keeping (and what taverns!) was quite usual among men of birth.¹ But the complexities of English social life since the Feudal period are infinitely greater. Probably not half the families seated upon the land to-day go back beyond George III. Estimates of certain districts occasionally published give something like this result. Of several counties I can of my own knowledge arrive at something like an approximate conclusion, and it agrees with these others. But counties and districts in this respect differ vastly. The Home Counties, for instance, have virtually broken with their past. They are full of aliens. Landed property of every kind is mainly in the hands of a more or less new element from all parts of Britain and the Empire, which derives most of its income from outside sources. Half a dozen counties are in a social sense little more than glorified suburbs. The landscape may remain in part rural, though thickly sprinkled with exotic marks. Sport and agriculture may be active. Ingenuous novelists and essayists in London or the suburbs may write of these regions as representing normal English rural life and society. The visiting American may imagine he is looking upon a typical

¹ Lawyers acquired land very freely in Scotland at all times. Whatever may have been the methods by which some legal founders of families in England acquired wealth, Scottish writers, including Sir Walter Scott, give a dark picture of the lawyer laird. The comparative poverty of land-owners, and land being the sole security for money in the country, gave the sharp man of business peculiar opportunities. In addition to this the cryptic phraseology of Scottish law, so inimitably set forth by Sir Walter himself, helped to bewilder and confound the unfortunate laird caught in its meshes.

English country-side. But all this is, of course, an utter fallacy. The influence of London even in old times covered a considerable radius. Fifty miles in nearly every direction would be no over-estimate of its range to-day.

But it has been given me during the last quarter of a century to make a tolerably intimate acquaintance almost parish by parish with a good many other English counties more typical for the purpose in hand, to trace back the fortunes of families and estates, and, not least, to appraise their domestic history as it is written on tomb and tablet in hundreds of parish churches. Genealogies, county histories, family documents are eloquent enough of the various careers followed by men of gentle birth and of the enterprises which brought so many landed families into being and continued to engage the energies of younger sons regardless of lineage. Most of us have heard, from the lips, probably, of old ladies of a past generation, that the Army and Navy, Church and Bar, were the only callings for a gentleman. Anglo-Irish squires, of Cromwellian or Williamite origin, with the thickest of brogues, still very likely give utterance to what half a century ago was accepted as a sort of good old English tradition. It occurred to no one, apparently, that in old England, say pre-Georgian England, there was no Army to speak of and no Navy (as a career for a gentleman); that the Church meant anything or nothing; while the Bar, aristocratic no doubt, was a little too much so, or at least too expensive, for most younger sons of average country squires. But it is on the chancel walls of parish churches that the Tudor or Jacobean *novus homo* proclaims most convincingly the current absence of any commercial shamefacedness. To-day the merchant squire who starts the family tomb with the family acres is almost always writ down thereon as a territorial magnate pure and simple. All allusion to the shop is suppressed.

The alderman squire of the seventeenth century, on the other hand, looks down on us from beneath his inherited or acquired armorial bearings quite unabashed in the character of a prosperous mercer or woolstapler. With the ladies, too, who so frequently brought the profits of commerce to improve the fortunes of a distinguished line, the parental haberdasher or clothier who provided their dower is frankly recognised in their own or their husband's mortuary inscription. And this, I have little doubt, for the simple reason that there was no incentive to the curious make-believe that has since been fostered by a healthy but utterly confused social

system. Human nature assuredly has not changed. Quite possibly there was friction on other accounts between the Londoner and his country neighbours. But as the sons and uncles and cousins of the latter were deep in trade, local or otherwise, the candour of the sculptured tomb in the parish church seems merely natural.

The Londoner, too, may have been of that wealthy city connection who lived gorgeously, and, as we know, not merely entertained the higher nobility and men of wit and fashion, but were often welcomed guests at the tables of the great. Such a man's outlook on life and knowledge of the world must have been in inverse ratio to that of most country squires of that day. He probably spoke the Court English, the sound and quality of which one would give much to hear, whereas the other's speech is shrouded in no such mystery, for it was unquestionably in most cases the dialect of his county, more or less modified. But provincial towns as well as London produced citizen squires. Some, no doubt, had an inherited right to armorial bearings, having regard to the number of cadets of landed families who went into trade. But if not they assumed arms, often indeed while still burghers, and heraldic experts tell us that this procedure was regarded as a perfectly legitimate one, so long as they did not annex some already in use; nor was any suggestion of misplaced vanity thereby involved.

That there were diverse kinds of country squires in those times goes without saying. A lord, too, was then a lord indeed! We have ample evidence that there are certain conspicuous but untitled families, both of Tudor and Norman origin, of wider culture, a Court connection, and in closer touch with the outside world. We may never know how these diverse elements regarded one another. Probably there is not much to know. Rural Society had not yet acquired a big S in the modern sense. The forms and ritual which gave the ladies of a later day opportunities for snubbing one another were not yet. They were all much occupied in domestic cares, and furthermore there were no roads as we understand the word. When they migrated to their town houses or lodgings in Exeter, Shrewsbury, or Worcester for a short winter season, as was the custom of many, the burgesses, as such, could hardly have been excluded from their company, for so many of them were relations. It is curious to note, too, how during Marlborough's wars a professional army began to introduce a new social element, though a very small one, into provincial centres. In this connection *The Recruiting Officer* is

distinctly illuminating. For Farquhar writes from his own experience as an officer quartered in Shrewsbury, to whose inhabitants, or rather 'To all friends round the Wrekin,' he dedicates the play.

For it was not merely the English democracy that so hated the notion of a standing army, but the country squires were among its stoutest opponents, since, as officers of the militia, it reduced them at once to an inferior military position. The young officer of Queen Anne's time appears in the provinces as a gentleman from whom the superior airs and graces of a man of the world, familiar even with Continental usages, are to be looked for, and no doubt resented by the country bucks. Brawls on this account with civilians were fairly frequent. The hospitable squire himself seems to accept with equanimity a slightly patronising attitude from his military guest. For the virtue of his daughters he lives in a constant state of alarm while the terrible captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, with their fine uniforms and insinuating worldly ways, are in the neighbourhood. It must be admitted that the ladies themselves give some cause for this anxiety.

But to return to our muttons. Several of the older families of Wiltshire spring from the cloth manufacture which flourished so early in that great wool-producing country. Others arose from like sources and died out after a few generations of squiresdom, leaving no memory but that emblazoned upon the walls of their parish church, and maybe some gem of a small Tudor or Jacobean manor-house now occupied by a big sheep-farmer of more sumptuous life and habit than the builder. Wilts, Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford, and Salop, in whole or part, I may say at once, are more particularly in my mind in these pages, for the excellent reason that I know them more intimately than any of those other portions of England which could be taken as typical for the purpose in hand. But I feel tolerably confident that what can be said of Worcester or Wilts will apply to Yorkshire or Norfolk. The extremities of the country, on the other hand, may be not inaptly illustrated by the ancient tag, or one may fairly say 'brag,' of the always rather money-worshipping and comfort-loving Englishman :

'A squire of Wales, a Knight of Cales,
And a laird of the North Countree :
A yeoman of Kent, with his yearly rent,
Could buy them out all three.'

Here again is the whimsical lament of a Cromwellian sequestrator on the Welsh border :

'Radnorsheer, poor Radnorsheer !
Never a park and never a deer,
Never a squire of £500 a year
But Richard Fowler of Abbey cwm-hir.'

The figure here mentioned would represent a fairly well-endowed squire of that period in a normal county.

To illustrate the intimate association of trade and land in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by a stray example or two may seem beside the mark. But here at any rate, culled almost at random from one of my notebooks, is John Groves, the first of his name to be squire of Mickleton in Gloucestershire. He was a Yorkshireman who had made money by trade in London. He died in 1616 in his 103rd year, just after his portrait had been taken, a work of art which makes him look extremely wide awake ! His son remained as a haberdasher in London and married a squire's daughter. Their son became squire of Mickleton as well as a prominent Bencher of the Temple, and incidentally the father of nineteen children, the eldest of whom married a grocer, obviously with the family blessing; the second daughter, a judge's son; while the eldest son succeeded to Mickleton. The pedigree of the Sandys family, founded by a North-country lad who became an archbishop, for long one of the most prominent in Worcestershire and afterwards ennobled, reveals a grocer and a haberdasher at the very zenith of its fame. Bishop Percy, of ballad renown, was a recognised cadet of the great Northumbrian House. His father was a grocer in Worcester, and the beautiful half-timbered house he occupied in Bridgnorth still stands.

And what, again, of these swarms of younger sons and their careers ? In Elizabeth's time the land produced less than a third of the grain per acre that it does to-day, when, some urban critics of British agriculture may be surprised to hear, our figures lead the world. There could have been no princely portion for the younger sons from an estate of, say, 2000 acres. What did they do ? There was no Army or Navy, nor often, for the poor man, any Bar. The Church, for a clever youth, held great opportunities, but in the seventeenth century could hardly have commended itself as the snug and gentlemanly provision it became later. Nor am I forgetting that many squires' sons became a sort of upper servants

in the households of great nobles. But the custom died out, I think, during the Tudor period. Nor again must the small expeditionary forces from time to time dispatched by the Crown or led by adventurers to the Continent be overlooked. But the supply of commissions must have been limited, and in any case the job was but a temporary one. Unlike the Scotch and Irish, each stimulated by quite different but equally cogent reasons, the Englishman does not figure much as a soldier of fortune in foreign armies, while of the Colonies a word or so later. But in the meantime we may well ask ourselves, why this search after showy and romantic careers for the younger son of olden days ? He had plenty of ordinary prosaic openings at home, and took them as a matter of course. It is quite certain that his sisters and his cousins and his aunts did not hold up their hands at the notion of trade, for half of them were allied, or prospectively allied, to it. It was deemed a fortunate thing if, through kinship or interest, an apprenticeship offered in the house of a big tradesman in London. Not a few, indeed, of the famous London apprentices we hear so much about were country gentlemen's sons. More found occupations in their own district, in such lines, for instance, as the great Severn trade, with its boat-loads of caps and crockery, butter and cheese, iron and Virginia tobacco, passing back and forth between Bridgnorth, Bewdley, Worcester, Gloucester, and Bristol, and the squire himself very often took a share in such ventures. Others became millers, maltsters, tanners, glovers, or even shopkeepers in the country towns. Some rented farms, which meant a very different existence for them and their wives from that which would be entailed by a similar proceeding in the same class of life to-day. Most of my own generation, I fancy, grew up with a hazy notion that Cromwell was a plebeian because he was a country brewer or the like. There are, perhaps, plenty of well-informed adults even now who do not realise that he was not merely of a landed family but of a wealthy and powerful one which had sumptuously entertained King James at Hinchingbrooke, though originally sprung from plain Glamorgan squires. For the son of a younger son, Cromwell, *alias* Williams, seems to have been exceptionally well endowed. Attorneys and surgeons too occur fairly often in family records, or as marrying squires' daughters, and parsons of course are well in evidence. Simple arithmetic precludes the possibility of more than one eldest son in the matrimonial market for each family of girls. Some of their marriages would, I feel sure, surprise those

who vaguely imagine that things in this particular were not merely as now, or as yesterday if you like, but 'more so.'

In the maritime counties, particularly the western ones, the sea no doubt attracted many a younger son. The Newfoundland fisheries, long before our North American Colonies were founded and for over a century afterwards, were of enormous importance to Devonshire, for this was a Mediterranean as well as a home trade. It is said that a third of the eligible manhood of the county disappeared thence in April to return in November, while squires with loose cash became part owners in ships, and their sons frequently sailed in them. The constant wars in Ireland during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, with their chances of loot and land, must also have attracted a good many young gentlemen. But of the hundred and odd English purchasers of estates in the six Plantation counties of Ulster the outlay was too large for the ordinary younger son, so far as one can judge from the list of planters, the particulars concerning them and the prices paid, as given in the Government survey of the day.¹

The American Colonies and the West Indies, particularly the former, figure as the favourite dumping-ground of the seventeenth-century younger son with the historian, when skimming briefly over these social trifles. The Americans themselves too, with a natural and venial yearning for decorative ancestors, work the younger-son tradition for all it is worth, and paint him when they get him as a much more important person than he really was. The New Englanders may be excepted, for they are a precise people and have worked out their genealogies carefully to the original Pilgrim father (using that term in a general sense) with more regard for him as a sturdy pioneer than as a possible armiger. He was generally, in fact, of respectable middle-class family. The theocratic atmosphere of New England was not calculated to attract the offspring of squires or the like. The southern colonies are, of course, their traditional goal. Captain John Smith, virtual founder of Virginia, took out seventy such with *gent* marked against each of their ill-fated names on his invaluable chronicle. They died to a man, poor fellows, and the only gleam in their brief and melancholy story is when the indomitable captain led out batches of them to fell trees and they swore so roundly at their blistering hands that a bucket of water down the neck was decreed for every oath, after which 'all was merriment and good humour.' The next

¹ Pynnar's *Survey of Ulster*, 1617.

'Supply,' including more of them, also died off. But a great many younger sons undoubtedly went to Virginia when the colony settled down to prosperity, and a great many of other sorts too. After the Civil Wars, ex-Royalists of all ranks and grades flocked there, most of the more important to return, naturally, at the Restoration. In conning the lists of these early settlers and then taking stock of those who ultimately came out on top as men of property and in a sense founders of families, it is interesting to speculate from their names, difficult enough with English ones, what various sources they came from. In the hard struggle of early colonial life the common men had probably rather the best of the younger son. An early governor of Virginia writes home with a touch of irritation, 'Everybody here wants to be a gentleman,' and the colony was assuredly run till the Revolutionary war in the interests of those who either were so by birth or became so through prosperity. With a few notable exceptions, most of the older and leading colonial families bear names of undistinguished sound to an English ear.

English tastes do not run much to genealogy, at any rate in any logical or accurate form. Hence no doubt the hardy superstitions and make-believes that flourish among us. What exacts most respect and consequently most desire is assured position, including the money to maintain it. That of a squire *qua* squire still receives ungrudging recognition, allowing, of course, for political asperities. The rustic on the estate may sniff a little at a brand-new one, but outside story-books he does not care two straws whether he is the third or the tenth of his line. The Southerners, and indeed Americans generally, have developed of late an astounding passion for ancestry. There is more patter, and upon the flimsiest grounds, about 'blue blood,' 'high breeding,' 'patrician bearing,' 'cavalier stock,' and suchlike stuff, in some modern American novels, good and bad, about modern American life, than in a whole year's output of fiction in Old England. But outside the State Historical Societies a delightful *naïveté* is the prevailing note; and this is not strange, perhaps, with an extremely sentimental people, who, as regards the Southern States, have, unlike the West Indies, been absolutely out of touch with English social life and its subtleties since immigration there virtually ceased, about 1700 A.D.¹

With regard to our national indifference to exact genealogy

¹ Ulster Presbyterians formed the chief influx after this period. They went to the Back country and did not assimilate with the English colonists.

and the modern American craze for glittering forebears, I will hazard the relation of an incident which struck me at the time as a most entertaining and significant illustration of both. Now some dozen years ago the ancient town of Shrewsbury celebrated the battle of 1403 by a series of festivities. These included a banquet given to a hundred or more notabilities of the town, and county and other guests, of whom the writer was one. Another was a genial person who had come all the way from South Carolina (or Georgia) in the character of a lineal descendant of the great Norman, Roger de Montgomery, who eight hundred years before had built Shrewsbury Castle. There are probably thousands of lineal descendants of the mighty Roger, just as there are thousands of legitimate descendants now living of even greater men than he, to wit the Plantagenet and other kings of England.¹ But our ingenuous friend from the States had not gone to work this way at all. His name merely happened to be Montgomery, and to many South Carolinians that would be quite enough, though it may well seem incredible to an Englishman, rather hazy though he may possibly be about such things, that the twentieth-century bearer of an ordinary place-name like Kent, Chester, or Durham should on that account assume descent from the twelfth-century Norman who held one or other of those counties as his fief!²

Our American visitor, however, a quiet and modest person, was taken at his own valuation, which I am positive was quite sincere. Perhaps the company took it vaguely for granted that he had traced his descent through orthodox sources. But I do not think this picturesque appeal interested them enough to provoke criticism of any kind even in a county where long pedigrees and old families are unusually numerous. Even the association of the modern surname with the mediæval barony did not seem to strike anyone or to arouse suspicion, probably because they were Englishmen and cared (in detail) for none of these things, though many descendants of other Marcher barons bearing famous local names were present. The stranger, however, had come all the way from South Carolina, as he piously, almost pathetically believed, to represent the American branch of the early Norman rulers of Montgomery and builders of Shrewsbury Castle. It was enough that he was a guest, and above all an American, and presumably an entertaining

¹ See Marquis de Ruvigny's published Rolls.

² Montgomery was a subsidiary fief of the Norman Roger who was also Earl of Shrewsbury.

orator. So of course he was put on the toast list, where, unhappily, he belied his nationality. But the humour of the situation seemed quite lost upon the company. A hundred faces looked serious, and subsequently bored. But then they could not know, as I had cause to know, the daring of an unsophisticated American when on the war-path for an ancestor. A distinguished writer on mediæval history sitting next to me was shaking with suppressed mirth, and probably a clerical antiquary or two were enjoying themselves, but on the whole I feel sure the joke was missed.

The multiplicity and individualism of English surnames form a strange contrast to the tautology of Wales, the Scottish Highlands, and some parts of Southern Scotland, where, with rare exceptions, a name alone means nothing. Great numbers of English names carry of themselves distinction, though the possession of them may sometimes be accidental; or again, when among the early American colonists you find such names as Baskerville, Fettiplace, or Champernowne, if you know your England at all, you know for a certainty who they are and whence they came. But the bulk of English surnames have no particular social significance one way or the other, though many at once proclaim their county, particularly in the lower ranks of life, which have shifted less. Upon the whole our names are perhaps not very sonorous or inspiring. Some are hideously ugly, while many seem of themselves to preclude the possibility of gentle blood, though this is never a safe assumption. Constantly in remote country churches one finds the place of honour among the dead occupied for two or three centuries by a name that seems curiously ill-assorted with broad acres and coat armour. Sometimes it may be a long extinct one whose place knows it no more; or again, one of those still surviving families that have flourished in respectable obscurity, but in local regard, for centuries without ever catching the public ear, or perhaps even the ear of the next county but one!

Now Prodgers was once upon a time the supreme conception of a comical vulgarian with Mr. Punch. But the only Prodgers I ever heard of in real life was that ancient family of Wernddu and Gwernvale in Monmouthshire, now extinct or territorially so. Their traditional quarrel with their cousins the Powells of Perther on the score of family precedence led to a well-known humorous incident, which illustrates in entertaining fashion the passion of Welshmen for these things as opposed to the comparative apathy of their Saxon neighbours. The once contemned cockney pseudonym of *Punch* is

of course a corrupted Welsh name (Ap-Rodger), and curiously rare : one of the very few, in fact, that of itself would suggest gentle blood. Rodgers were evidently scarce when the Welsh in the sixteenth century found the inconvenience of pedigree nomenclature and adopted the Christian name of their father (usually) as a permanent surname, rejecting the picturesque suggestion, as it is said, of Henry VIII. that the names of their estates or farms should be adopted ; the consequence being that both have to be used to-day in most Welsh counties, on every occasion, from sheer necessity.

Trade could never have entered very seriously into the life of the armiger in most Welsh counties before the eighteenth century, for the sufficient reason that there was none. What the Welsh younger son did must remain a mystery, for Welsh social life between the Reformation, which darkened rather than illuminated the Principality, and the Hanoverian period, is itself rather obscure. There is no reason to suppose that the predilection for pedigrees which distinguishes the Welsh would have included any prejudice against trade had the opportunity arisen. But the genealogical instinct of the Cambrian is not altogether due, I think, to pride of race. A venial vanity, no doubt, has a fair share in it, but genealogy of itself has a strong detached interest for Welshmen. You will find men among all classes with an entirely impersonal interest in the ancestry of their neighbours. ' I should like to show you a little collection of pedigrees I have at home ' is an offer I have had frequently made to me in Wales, and I can assure the reader that a Welsh MS. pedigree is a tolerably formidable document. I myself knew well a working man in Cardiganshire who spent his leisure hours in walking about collecting such material purely for his own amusement. Imagine a Wiltshire ploughman thus occupied !

Welsh social history is a thing apart. You do not expect to run up against a mercer or a goldsmith in a Welsh family tree which soars away through generations of virtual fixtures on the soil, and through a dim and pastoral past, till it finds its inevitable source in one or other of the five royal or fifteen noble tribes of Wales. And there you are ! Rather disconcerting, however, is the small scale on which the dignity of a Welsh armiger must often have supported itself, not so very long ago. In the small grey stone houses still surviving in fair numbers, one seems to have arrived at a life so primitive as to require some readjustment of social values ; men farming their own land, and not too much of it nor yet

too fertile, beyond a doubt. I fear that, despite the pedigree, our London haberdasher's well-dowered daughter would have turned up her nose at an average Welsh squire in Elizabeth's golden days. The Welsh were never great sea-goers, though a few, like Morgan, rose to fame as buccaneers. The superfluous sons must have taken to farming in some fashion, and though never much given to colonising there was an agricultural movement into Pennsylvania early in the eighteenth century. This probably included a good many of the Welsh gentry, for a contemporary English traveller, describing the characteristics of the various groups of settlers, alludes to the Welsh as 'greatly devoted to hunting and dogs.'¹

Again, under the healthy, happy-go-lucky English social system, which must always, as now, have bewildered the foreigner, the intrusion of a genealogically unqualified female and her strain of blood into a family is quite overlooked. Marriage with respectable and often no doubt quite presentable women of neither birth nor fortune occurs constantly in pedigrees, as one would expect. But when only a female remains to continue the line and her husband takes her name this attitude is conveniently reversed and the paternal blood ignored. When that wonderful lady, Miss Kynnersley, of Loxley, in Staffordshire, married the most excellent Baron de Bode, her family strongly objected for the good old English reason that the baron was a foreigner. But when the bride arrived in Germany the tables were turned, the baron's relations withholding any recognition of her till a satisfactory account of the lady's pedigree was furnished by the Heralds' College. The Kynnersleys were fortunately of the *élite* of our gentry, and all was satisfactory. But when a further demand for eight successive generations of armigers on the female side was made, any country squire's daughter in England may well have felt some anxiety. However, the many who have read her delightful letters will remember that this clever, capable, and pushful English baroness secured the friendship and intimacy of much bigger people all over Europe than the mother and sisters of a German baron, though she had this too. But her brother the squire never forgave her.

A. G. BRADLEY.

¹ An American antiquary resides or used to reside in Wales, where, having mastered the intricacies of Welsh genealogy, he made it his business to elucidate their pedigrees for Pennsylvania Welsh families upon orthodox principles.

A HIGHLAND ANZAC.

BY LADY POORE.

Clean aims, rare faculties, strength and youth,
 They have poured them freely forth
 For the sake of the sun-steeped land they left
 And the far green isle in the North.

Australia's Men, by DOROTHEA MACKELLAR.

For the first time in the life of each of us Phœbe and I have been to Scotland. It is excusable in Phœbe, who is so many years my junior and only paid her first visit to the British Isles in 1904, but I am ashamed to think I have been going to and fro upon the earth and the sea for nearly half a century without once crossing the Border. And yet the postponement of this excursion into the near unknown is not without advantages. One has heard of people who had neither permission nor opportunity to read the Bible till they were grown up, and to them it came as a revelation of wonder and beauty. That is what the Highlands have been to us whose minds have already been filled with impressions of various shapes, colours, sizes, and consistencies till it is surprising there should be one corner left, one spot of absorbent tissue upon which the imprint of a new sensation may be received. The long journey, undertaken at a moment when London was like a basement kitchen and even Perth no better than a stuffy attic, ended in the aromatic ethereal sweetness of a six-mile drive through heather, bog-myrtle, and bracken, past twisted firs, red-barked and shaggy-headed, standing crookedly against a blushing sunset sky.

We woke next morning with the waters of Lochalsh plashing and murmuring not many yards from our beds. Ten huge sea-gulls screamed and squabbled over their breakfast on a field of orange seaweed slashed with silver pools and embossed with blue-black knobs of granite; and with them, grudgingly tolerated as humble retainers, were three hoodie crows and a yellow hen with nine chicks of mixed parentage. Beyond the pools lay a stretch of darkling water shadowed by the black velvet hills of Skye—twin hills that faced us with a narrow strait between them leading south. It was hard to dress quickly with half one's attention flying out of the window, but the prospect of eating real porridge

was alluring, and after breakfast the exploration of a new world. We would not have changed places with Columbus.

We were the only visitors at the comfortable grey-gabled hotel at Z—— and absorbed and gladly held the friendly, if undemonstrative, attention of the tiny village, a row of little houses set by the lochside on a sheep-trimmed sward where bare-legged children with dark bright eyes kept holiday from dawn to dusk in company with a couple of sheep dogs and a pack of wise-faced, short-legged terriers. Thatched cottages from whose moss-grown roofs grass and ferns sprouted, and low stone houses whose walls were gay with scarlet fuchsias and blazing tropœum crouched behind fenced gardens in which the prose of potatoes and cabbages was enlivened by the invasion of tall blood-red poppies with navy-blue hearts and grey-green leaves.

We had been a week at Z——, a week of undiminished fervour as explorers within a three-mile radius, favoured with warm sunshine and blessed by the sight of mountains, sea, and sky varying almost from minute to minute in colour, character and atmosphere, when the Highland Anzac descended from a dog-cart at our very door. We had lazily breakfasted in our rooms, and I was dressing at the moment but peeped behind the blind in time to catch a glimpse of the broad-brimmed hat of the tall soldier. Instantly I pinned my *Australia* brooch (the shoulder and hat badge of the Australian Imperial Force) into my tie and sent my maid to tell Phœbe of her countryman's approach. Before I was ready to leave my room I heard her welcoming the new-comer. Had he been the last and least of Australia's soldiers he must have responded to the friendship in her warm, deep tones; but he was of the true and the best type—the type now familiar to English eyes, yet, somehow, exotic still. Nearly six feet high is Donald Macleod, rose-bronze of skin, broad of shoulder and lean of limb; square-browed and endowed with well-opened eyes of a blue, now bright, now shadowed, like the waters of a mountain tarn, and fringed with thick black lashes. When he laughs he squeezes up his eyes till the dark fringes interlace, and his small teeth flash white between lips not full but kindly and humorous. He is a corporal, and we believe him to be twenty-four. Born in New South Wales and educated at the best of Sydney's schools—and they are very good—he travelled westward like the rising sun to Perth (W.A.). A pearl-fisher of Broome by choice and occupation, he basked for a few years in and on the sunny waters of a tropical

archipelago, and when the Empire wanted him he came, one of twenty-two Macleods, expatriated patriots of his clan who, from the simple private to the distinguished colonel, have left their all at the Antipodes to follow the old flag. He was in the first division of the A.I.F. to see service in Flanders, and there to the slight wound he had received at Gallipoli he added five others, all in his left side, which chiefly interest him as providing a reason for his joining the Australian Flying Corps, a service in which he would not have to carry a pack.

The mettle and temperament of the Anzac fit him peculiarly for dashing enterprises. He is wasted on slow and dogged nibbling and unsuited for the tame but valuable task of following up the pioneer. His psychological attitude and mental equipment, like his physique, are those of the race-horse : he *may* break his heart if he is badly ridden in a race, but he will surely break it if he is put to ploughing.

'I'm ashamed of this jacket,' said Donald Macleod, surveying his shabby sleeve with disfavour. 'I bought it off a fellow the other day when I hadn't a rag to my back, but I'll get a tailored jacket, not an "issued" one, in London.' 'I hear the Anzacs' measurements are an inch every way more than the English soldiers,' said Phœbe proudly. 'That's right,' answered the boy. 'And an inch or so less in every way in boots,' said I to myself. Corporal Macleod was wearing a pair of clumsy-looking English-made boots, and I remembered the beautifully cut boots and gaiters I had seen worn by a couple of newly arrived Australian Tommies in London a month or two ago. It is a fact that Australian khaki and leather equipment is vastly superior to that produced in England. Australian sheep and cattle have afforded their very best, and Australian factories have put their finest work into the Anzacs' uniforms, so that the most ordinary private has a look of unusual smartness as long as his workaday rig holds together.

Our Anzac had been given ten days' furlough as soon as ever he was fit to leave the hospital where he had been for ten weeks, and had come north to visit his unknown Highland 'aunties' a few miles from Z—. They were kind and hospitable, but it wasn't 'life,' and Donald Macleod is very human, bubbling with vitality, eager for experiences. The lift he had been offered to Z— that morning gave him a chance to stretch a mind weary with answering questions about his family in Western Australia on his last morning in Scotland, and when his fellow-travellers, two elderly members of a School

Board Committee, had been deposited at our door, he was free to browse around alone. But we did not let him browse alone. In our own sitting-room we gave him 'morning tea,' an institution dear to Australians and easily adopted by those who visit Australia, and then we went and sat on a great purple rock, crested with white and orange lichens and three parts surrounded by the falling tide, and talked about the war. Corporal Macleod was as completely free from shyness as he was from 'swank,' answering our questions frankly but minimising his own share in the world's earthquake. 'They're awfully good to us in England, but the papers insist on making us all out heroes, whereas we're really only good soldiers,' was the refrain of his reminiscences. 'And it's the same in France, mind you. I talk French a bit (there's all sorts to talk to up at Broome), but the French beat me once they begin to chat. They were ripping to us at Dijon; the French ladies couldn't do enough for us at the railway station with flowers and fruit and what not. One of our chaps pondered a bit and then said to the leading lady: "Madame, le rose de Dijon est le gloire de Dijon, mais *je* dis les dames de Dijon est le vrai gloire de Dijon." She seemed to grasp what he meant and went on talking nineteen to the dozen and smiled more than that. But some of the peasants were completely "boxed" by the Australian badges. They kept asking if we were *Autrichiens*. You see we were the first Australians to get over. They know all about it now, and nothing is too good for us.'

It was near Armentières that our Anzac was wounded. A bursting shell made five holes in him as he was lying on the ground. 'I got the news of the Battle of Jutland when they were dressing my wounds, and, my word! it hurt more than the dressing. I said to myself, "This is *my* bad day, sure enough." It beats me now how the papers made such a sad song about that victory. The day before I was near being wiped out by a shell. Only that something made me wait and talk to a parson—not a habit of mine—it would have got me clean. He was a good chap too, and I don't mind owing him my life. You'd be surprised to see the way the French and the Belgians carry on their business as if nothing was happening. There was an old woman used to bring the newspapers into our trenches as regular as clockwork, no matter how the Boche was strafing us.'

'Aren't you proud of being a Highlander?' we asked, for our minds were so full of the charm of the place and the history of its people that we felt positively envious of the boy's origin.

He smiled disarmingly and answered ' I haven't much of an eye for scenery : I don't seem to notice it much, anyway ; and, to say the truth, I'm keen on getting to a place in Hampshire called A—— where a big swell a friend in Westralia gave me an introduction to lives. There'll be more people there, and I've not seen many so far outside the hospital at X——.' ' Were they good to you there ? ' I asked. ' Good as gold, but uncommon strict, and there were more flowers to smell than food to eat on the table at meals some days. But they were kind, ~~and~~ no mistake. The ward-sister opened all the windows of the ward I was in to let me hear the gramophone in another wing spouting out "Australia will be there." ' There were a lot of enterics among the patients, poor chaps. Queer, isn't it ? how the ones I'm most sorry for seem to get the least attention from visitors. Why, I wouldn't wear my wound stripe in hospital for fear they'd feel out of it, but there were ladies, young and pretty and old and ugly, who'd come into the ward and, if they saw a man with a couple of fingers missing or a bandage round his head, it was "Oh, I am so sorry you are wounded ! Does it hurt much ? Would you care to come out for a motor-ride and have tea at our house this afternoon ? " . . . The wounded chap would say " My wound's all right, thank you, I'm only wearing that bandage to please the doctor " ; but she'd go on pouring out sympathy and invitations till the poor devil was forced to accept. Next bed, perhaps, there'd be an enteric, dead sick of hospital and feeling like nothing on earth. " Where were *you* wounded ? " the lady would ask. " Not wounded, miss—enteric (or perhaps dysentery)'s my trouble." " Ooo-hh ! " says the sympathiser with wounded men only, and on she goes to the next bed. No drives or tea-parties for the men that were lying there weeks and weeks, while we that were well and fit, but for a bullet-hole or two or a scratch of a shell, would be fairly smothered with attention. My word ! it used to make me feel sick and ashamed.'

Phoebe was in Cairo in March and had seen the shocked faces and up-raised hands of those who unsparingly condemned the mad pranks of idle Anzacs in that city, the most unsuitable headquarters for half-disciplined troops imaginable. ' Were you one of the men who decorated Ibrahim Pasha's equestrian statue by putting a nose-bag on his horse ? ' she asked. ' I wasn't in that,' said Corporal Macleod, ' but I helped to throw a piano out of the window of one of the houses we wrecked in the quarter that ruined so many of our men. I wish the fire that followed had burnt

the whole beastly place up.' 'So do I,' Phœbe agreed. 'Why, in the name of common sense, they didn't create a camp city on the banks of the canal I shall never understand. It was a crazy thing to turn loose a pack of new-made soldiers, cramped and restless after a six weeks' voyage on board crowded troopships, in a place like Cairo, that breeds more harpies and sharpers to the square yard than perhaps any other city in the world, unless it's San Francisco.'

'What about General Birdwood?' I asked. 'Have you ever spoken to him?' The Anzac's eyes disappeared behind their lashes and his teeth flashed in a glad grin. 'Once,' he answered. 'There's hardly one of us who can't say he had the opportunity. He asked me when I thought the war'd be over, and I had to smile. My word! he's a fine chap.'

The gentlemen of the School Board Committee had done their work, and when we saw the 'machine' drive round from the stables we left our rock and returned to the hotel. The minister climbed stiffly into the front seat, and our Anzac, after a warm handshake, saluted and took his place beside the white-haired grocer at the back. Phœbe and I gazed and waved from the door till the merry face with its strong oval framed in the curve of a brown chin-strap receded in a blur of white dust from the long straight road. 'I wish he had seemed the least little bit impressed by the Highlands,' I said regretfully.

'You needn't worry,' answered Phœbe. 'When he gets back to West Australia and has time to sort out his memories and talk things over with his people he'll be just as proud of being a Highlander as he is of being an Anzac.'

THE BRINK OF ACHERON.

FAR down the glen, on the crest of a conspicuous spur—a bright spot of colour. Major Duckworth of King George III.'s Own Fusiliers dived his hand into the mighty pocket of his overcoat, drew out his glass, and focussed it on the object. It was a scarlet coat—the King's uniform.

Four hours had passed since then, and at length Duckworth was forced to recognise that not alone would he have only his pains for his labour, but that he was hopelessly lost amongst the intricacies of the Sierra de Avila. The valley that had seemed so full of feature at first, was for him featureless. Each subsidiary glen seemed exactly like the other; every spur looked the twin of the next. To add to the difficulties of the situation the mists had come down to within a hundred feet of the bottoms.

Moreover, he had disobeyed orders; and he realised that when he returned—if he returned—to camp, his reception by Sir Edward Pakenham, however reasonable his excuses, would be the reverse of sympathetic.

He had excuses, or rather explanations, which had appeared quite satisfactory an hour or so ago. It was true that a general order had been issued that scouts were not to venture far out of touch with the outposts; but in the circumstances, the order had seemed inapplicable—a few hours ago.

The reason for the order was that recently no fewer than four officers employed on reconnaissance duty among the hills had failed to return to headquarters at Fuente Aguenaldo. The French knew nothing of them, and the French were honourable adversaries. On the other hand, the inhabitants of the Sierra were Spanish irregulars—our allies, guerrillas who varied the intervals between action and retreat by remunerative military exploits, flavoured under favourable conditions by torture. It was not inconceivable that these gentlemen might have failed to differentiate between the French and English nationalities in the case of the absentees.

Explanation I.—Duckworth had seen the King's uniform on a stray figure—presumably that of one of the missing officers. It was therefore his duty to ride in search of him.

Explanation II.—The hills in that neighbourhood were innocent of guerrilla—for a season, at least. Early in the day, Duckworth

had watched a force of French rounding up a large body of his irregular allies at the point of the bayonet, in a businesslike manner that evoked his enthusiastic admiration.

Result!—Disobedience to orders and nothing whatever to show for it.

If his thoughts were gloomy, his surroundings were depressing. Every stream, every runnel, every trickle, was frothing with dirty grey soapsud-coloured water; the clean white limestone cliffs had taken a dull, grey, lifeless, unwashed hue; the dripping dank leaves seemed to be doing their best to turn grey, and over all the mist stretched its grey, unwholesome canopy.

For some time he had followed the river, the general direction of which would, he knew, take him towards the British lines; but all at once the water, after the exasperating habit of mountain streams in limestone countries, slipped underground, leaving a trackless chaos of stones and boulders. Disgustedly the Major turned his charger's head, trusting to luck to find a way out somehow to somewhere.

Now and again he would halt and give a hail in the hope of attracting the attention of the wandering brother officer he was seeking.

Unexpectedly his hail was answered—almost at his elbow. The intonation was not English, and Duckworth swung round, pistol in hand, to find himself face to face with a Spanish priest.

The stranger's bearing was refined, his manner courteous, his voice cultured, his features handsome and prepossessing. Nevertheless, Duckworth decided out of hand that the man was a scoundrel, and that he was in that strange place at that strange hour for some sinister purpose. Not even when, after a few words of salutation, the priest offered his poor hospitality for the night and his services as guide in the morning, did he modify his opinion. He hated Spanish priests.

‘Tis the eye of childhood that fears a painted devil'; and when a grown man is offered the choice between a desperately certain deep sea of night, on storm-swept, brigand-haunted hills, and shelter with a prejudicate devil, the alternative is not difficult of decision. With fair words on his lips and mistrust in his heart, Duckworth permitted himself to be guided by the priest.

The way led sharply upwards; then once and again twisted smartly between colonnades of fantastic spikes of limestone, and

so on, through a path, or rather alley, over-roofed with interlacing boughs of tangled trees.

Emerging from the wood, they found themselves in a towering amphitheatre of rock, sheer or overhanging, broken by little terraces of vivid green, and with here and there a yew or birch or mountain ash growing out of the crevices. It recalled to the Major a place he had once seen in his own country—a mighty rift in the scarp of the great Craven Fault, Gordale Scar. For a moment he stood gazing upwards, overawed by the grandeur and the gloomy majesty of it.

‘We are here !’

It was the priest who spoke, and at the sound of the voice Duckworth started, then laughed foolishly. Here ! This was anchorite hospitality indeed. He looked round through the increasing darkness in the hope of finding so much as a cave.

The priest laughed also, and pointed ahead to where a low barrier of limestone stretched across the gorge.

At first sight it appeared part of the parent cliff, but closer inspection showed it to be strangely regular in outline. It was in fact the wall of a considerable building, and a second glance sufficed to recognise it as such, although an attempt had been made to emphasise its resemblance to its surroundings by piling broken rock along the top of the wall and leaving the edges ragged. Again the priest laughed, and, taking Duckworth by the arm, led him onwards, and so through an opening—which even scrutiny might have mistaken for the entrance to a cave—to the interior.

There was shelter here—solid shelter ; but the Major could not throw off the feeling that he would prefer to be out in the storm on the mountains. The place was uncomfortably like a prison—a low, square, featureless edifice, enclosed within a quadrangle of massive wall through which he had just passed.

He had no opportunity for immediate reflection, however, for the priest, who had hitherto been somewhat taciturn, began to talk with great volubility. It seemed to Duckworth that he was endeavouring to attract his interest, or rather to distract it. Still, there was neither sight nor sound to justify suspicion, so he suffered himself to be led to a shed, built within the court between the containing walls and the building, which he was gratified to find was a stable. Here the priest took his leave for a few minutes,

with apologies that he had no servant and a light observation on the fondness of the English for their horses.

'The foolish fondness for his horse,' characteristic of the English according to Mauvillon, did not deter Duckworth from thinking, and thinking hard. The place did not look like a monastery, though there was no reason to suppose it was not. For the matter of that, the man did not look like a priest.

Ere long, Duckworth began to realise that he was physically as well as mentally uncomfortable. Before he had finished grooming his steed, the perspiration was running off him. The atmosphere was something like that of a vapour bath. Up till then, he had been unpleasantly chilly and only too glad of the warmth of his great-coat. Neither was it the temperature only that was oppressive. The place was unnaturally still. Without, had been clangour and anger of elements; within the gorge, was quiet. The tumult of the wind passed high overhead and was shut off by the overhanging cliffs. The only obtrusive sound was a dull, unusual murmur that seemed, to the Major's imagination, to come from far below him.

He was wondering what it might mean, when a step on the flags of the court arrested his attention. A man was coming towards him—a man who was not a priest. In an instant his pistol was cocked and ready.

The man laughed.

'Surely, sir,' he said, 'yours is a somewhat discourteous way of greeting your host!'

Duckworth stared. The voice and features were those of the priest, but the costume was that of a Spanish gentleman, and Duckworth noted that the hair was untonsured.

'Come!' continued the Spaniard, 'if you have finished with your horse, you will be glad of some refreshment. I can offer you but little. Still, it will be more palatable than bread and water.'

He turned as he spoke, and led the way across the court. Duckworth noted with a thrill that he limped slightly. There were ill tales in the camp of a bandit with a limp.

They passed into the house, crossed a hall, and entered a small room, roughly but comfortably furnished. On the hearth a newly lighted fire of logs was crackling. The window was wide open.

The stranger courteously assisted Duckworth out of his great-

coat, which he threw over an arm-chair in front of the blaze. Then, indicating a chair at a table on which food and wine were laid out, he seated himself in his turn and poured out two goblets of wine.

'I dare say, sir,' he said, with twinkling eyes, 'you are wondering—and perhaps with not a little suspicion—what the meaning of all this is?'

Duckworth flushed, and made a deprecating movement with his hand. The other laughed again.

'To begin at the beginning,' he resumed. 'Why the disguise of a priest? Because, sir, I value my skin. You English, I do not fear—except on a retreat. The French, however, are most inconsiderate to all Spaniards—even non-combatants—but they leave the clergy alone. Finally, on these hills, there are countrymen of my own, who, I fear, prey on all and sundry. Fortunately, they are superstitious or excessively religious—call it which you will—and so—' he ended with an expressive gesture.

Duckworth had been studying the man carefully. He was of fine presence and soldierly bearing.

'Why not join the army?' he asked.

'Because, sir, your British methods of fighting do not appeal to me. I fought at Albuera. Ah! I know hard things have been said of my nation, but it is not given to all nations to stand still like a wall and be shot down. Also, I was unhorsed, ridden over by the cavalry, speared whilst on the ground by a Polish lancer, and lamed for life. In fact, sir, I have had enough of war.'

Duckworth began rather to like the man. After all, it was not given to every nation to breed regiments of Fusiliers and Die-Hards, and the Spaniard had fought and taken punishment.

'You have been very frank with me, señor,' he said, 'may I ask of your courtesy one more question?'

'Who am I, and what am I doing here?' laughed the Spaniard.

Duckworth nodded.

'It is easily answered—I am Don Luiz Aguinaldo, once a wealthy hidalgo, now a poor fugitive. The accursed French have swept my estates like a flight of locusts: my mines are unworked, my vineyards destroyed. My cousin was a priest in this monastery: I had visited him here and knew of it. When war broke out, the Fathers, to a man, left their sanctuary and went out to serve the

sick and the wounded. I made my way here, found the place deserted, and here I have lived ever since.'

All Duckworth's mistrust returned in a moment. 'I don't believe a word of it,' was his unspoken comment. What he said was :

'I wonder you can stand it. It is the most enervating place I have ever been in. I should die of exhaustion in a week.'

'Yes,' assented Aguinaldo, 'that fire is not for comfort, but to dry your coat. Your boots would be none the worse for a toasting either. Wait, I will get a light.'

As he spoke, he kindled a taper at the fire and proceeded to light a lamp. This he placed for a moment on a table in the window and then, as if on second thoughts, set it down by Duckworth. All the time he kept up an incessant flow of talk.

'It is the hot springs,' he explained. 'This is, in fact, the real Fuente Aguinaldo. The town—your headquarters—is a by-product, an offshoot. A strange place it is, and a strange place this old monastery is, too. It is a quadrangle within a quadrangle, and right in the centre of the building is a great tank. I suppose it was a natural formation in the first instance, and was carved into regular shape by the monks. The waters are always warm, and at one time had a great reputation for healing rheumatism and such complaints. Cripples used to come on crutches and go away dancing, so say the monks. I have no doubt the holy men made a good thing out of it. However, somehow or other, it lost credit, and I believe I am about the only person who uses it now. I have a bathe every morning. Not,' he ended ruefully, 'that it does my wounded leg any good.'

Duckworth was puzzled. He scented mischief. He was confident that the Spaniard was deceiving him, yet he was, paradoxically, sure he was speaking the truth. Nothing, however, was to be gained by conjecture, so he affected an interest in his surroundings, talked of the waters at Bath and all kinds of bagatelles. Eventually, almost inevitably, the conversation came round to the war. Duckworth had missed Albuera, and was delighted at the prospect of a first-hand account from an eyewitness.

Don Aguinaldo spoke like a soldier. He understood and appreciated the cleverness of Soult's manœuvres and was unsparing in his denunciation of Blake. For Beresford his admiration knew no bounds. His desperate courage and heroic strength dominated

the Spaniard's imagination. Duckworth concluded that his host was unacquainted with the Marshal's exploit of carrying a runaway Spanish ensign, colours and all, to the front, and deemed it courteous not to enlighten him.

The evening passed pleasantly without word or act that could be construed into confirmation of Duckworth's suspicions—save one. He chanced to mention the encounter between the French and Spaniards he had witnessed that morning, and he thought that his host for an instant changed countenance. He could not be sure, for at that moment Aguinaldo chanced to spill his glass of wine, and the annoyance his face exhibited might have been attributable to the accident.

At an early hour they retired for the night. Duckworth was weary in head and body. The day had been a trying one physically, the tepid atmosphere of the gorge was most exhausting, and finally he could not shake off the impression that his host was a villain who would cut his throat if opportunity offered. Suddenly suspicion became conviction.

Aguinaldo was conducting him down a long corridor of the monastery to his bedroom, when Duckworth recognised an odour that was not incense. It was quite unmistakably a mixture of rank tobacco and garlic. Now, his host's cigars he had found singularly good, and the hidalgo did not reek of garlic. Moreover, the smell was too strong to be the 'drag' of one individual, however high. A less intelligent man than the Major would have recognised that the chances were that he was in a brigands' nest. Duckworth felt his appreciation of the French he had seen that morning increase immensely. But for them, he might by that time have died rather painfully. As it was, he was confident from the admirable manner in which they had attended to the business in hand, there was nothing to fear from the Spanish gentlemen of the hills for some time to come. As for Aguinaldo, he could, and would, wring his neck as soon as look at him, for the Major was certainly no weaker a man than Marshal Beresford.

Nevertheless, he lay down with his pistols under his pillow and his drawn sword by his side. The point of his scabbard he had jammed under the door—a most effective wedge.

Tired as he was, he could not sleep. He could not even rest. That dull, unusual murmur he had noticed in the courtyard, that never-ceasing, monotonous, subterranean muttering, was unmis-

takable. It was closer, clearer, and more insistent. It seemed to come now actually from beneath his feet. He tossed impatiently from his couch and leaned out of the open window.

The murmur was, if anything, less distinct, and there was nothing to be seen but the unsightly gloom of the pallid limestone cliffs, barely visible in a drip of sickly moonlight that filtered down through the dank atmosphere. It was pleasanter to keep the eyes closed than to look on a scene so sepulchral, and Duckworth was turning away when he noted that the thin rays trembled below him into broken radiance.

It was water—the surface of the tank of which he had been told, the innermost of the quadrangles—reflecting the moonbeams. The sinister murmur was caused no doubt by the overflow or escape of the drainage. And this was the bogey that had fretted him.

A broad, harsh, yellow glare flashed crudely across the water. Duckworth instinctively stepped away from the window into the darkness of his room.

The precaution seemed unnecessary. The cause of the light appeared innocent enough. Through a casement on the opposite side of the quadrangle could be distinguished the form of Don Aguinaldo, silhouetted against the light of a lamp he held in his hand. He appeared to be hanging up some bright-coloured garment beside a row of others on the wall of the chamber. Duckworth could not distinguish details as the glare of the light was between him and them.

‘Inspecting his wardrobe!’ grunted he. ‘I dare say the fellow has as many disguises as a mountebank, and—’

A low, hideous laugh poisoned the stillness, and bore on its evil wings a hideous suggestion that made Duckworth’s scalp creep and his seated heart knock at his ribs. Those bright garments on the wall—might they not be—were they not British—the tunics of the missing officers? The light of the lamp had disappeared, but enough came from the moon to enable him to locate the casement, the third from the left-hand end. He resolved to inspect it in the morning at all hazards, and if he found his suspicions correct, Don Aguinaldo should indeed guide him back to the British camp, but with a pistol at his ear and a gallows in prospect.

He was worn out in mind and body, and recognised that sleep he must. He accordingly wheeled his couch parallel to, and immediately below the window-sill, so that anyone attempting to steal

in by that route must inevitably tread on him, and dropped off in profound slumber.

He awoke feeling thoroughly out of sorts. He had lain down almost fully dressed in case of emergencies, and the discomfort inseparable from a night in one's clothes was aggravated by the clammy warmth of the atmosphere. His head was aching, his mouth was dry, and he was sticky all over—skin, clothes, and hair. He felt detestably unclean, and began to think longingly of the possibilities of a bathe in the tank.

As if in response to his thought, there came a hail from below his window, and, looking out, he saw Aguinaldo, standing at the water's edge, clothed in a towel. The Spaniard's face darkened as he noted Duckworth's attire. Nevertheless, he wished him a fair good morning and courteously invited him to join him in a swim.

'He can't do me any mischief in that kit,' thought Duckworth. 'I wonder if I am wronging the fellow!'

He sent back a cheery reply, and in a few moments had swung himself out of the window and was by Aguinaldo's side, similarly attired.

The tank was of considerable size—some forty feet in length by twenty across. It had obviously been hewn into its present rectangular formation, but no attempt had been made to polish the sides, which remained covered with small excrescences and seamed with minute fissures. Near one corner stood a crude apparatus—a sort of combination between a ship's wheel and a lock-sluice, by which, Aguinaldo explained, they regulated the water which welled in through a crack in the centre and escaped into the bowels of the earth through an opening in the corner of the tank immediately below the wheel.

To Duckworth it seemed that the water was lower than it had been during the night—it was quite four feet below the edge—an impression doubtless due to the change of light. The fact was, however, vexatious. It had been his intention during his swim, quite unobtrusively, to get out of the water under the third casement from the left and take a glance at the interior. As it was, he perceived there was only one exit from the bath—by a rope ladder close to where he was standing. Whilst he was revolving these things in his mind, the Spaniard's voice broke in.

'I am wondering,' he said, 'whether it would be possible for

a man to cover the entire length of the tank in one plunge. I have tried, and failed. The breadth is as much as I can do.'

Duckworth measured the distance with his eye. It was a sporting suggestion. He poised himself for a moment, and then launched his superb frame out in a magnificent header, neither did he move muscle till his fingers touched the limestone at the far side. When he had shaken the water from his eyes and turned, he saw Aguinaldo had drawn up the ladder.

'Fairly trapped, Major!' sneered the Spaniard. 'Bah! what a fool you are! How you came to the lure of the uniform! It belonged to one Vavasour, of the 14th Dragoons. My merry men brought him in, but those thrice-accursed French have driven them away. That uniform hangs in yonder room as a memorial of an insult to a Spanish *hidalgo*, and yours shall hang there too.'

So the vision had not lied. Duckworth felt no fear, only a fierce remorse. Had he but verified his suspicions—and the Spaniard could not have prevented him—he would have brought the murderer to execution. As it was:

'Fairly trapped!' came the taunting voice. 'I had to work by myself, and here you are, the strongest of them all, helpless to my hand! I am glad you are strong—that you can swim long. I have much to say. Only please do not attempt to climb out. I have a brace of pistols on that window-sill, and am a good shot.'

He paused, hoping against hope for appeal for mercy, but Duckworth made no reply. He was reckoning up his chances. His silence exasperated Aguinaldo.

'Curse you English!' he shouted. 'Ah! you are brave now, whilst you are strong and warm, but wait—wait till you are weak and cold and death is at hand. Then—then, you will weep for mercy like your comrades—'

'Liar!' interrupted Duckworth coolly.

'For that word,' returned Aguinaldo, stamping, 'I would have the skin scoured from your back if my men were here. As it is—' He broke into blasphemy and imprecations.

Duckworth, paddling easily, watched him, well content. However slight his chances, they would be immeasurably increased if his enemy lost his self-command. After a while the Spaniard resumed.

'I did not tell you how I was unhorsed at Albuera. It was that great bully, Beresford. He struck me from the saddle with

his hand. He called me—*me*—coward ! And I swore, as I lay on the ground, I would have an English officer's life for every finger on his hand. Four have I taken. You are the fifth, and you shall die, die, die !'

Duckworth continued silently swimming. There was just one chance for him—a desperate chance. Everything depended on swiftness of execution. Scarcely had he conceived the idea when his tormentor furnished an opportunity.

'Have you any idea what will happen to you ?' he cried. 'See this wheel ! Below, in that corner, is the sluice-gate—a great slab of stone. One turn of the wheel and the water will sweep you down, down, with irresistible force, through the sluice, deep into the earth, where you shall lie with your comrades. No one will ever know your fate. There, in those dreadful caverns, you shall lie and rot. Ah, I wish I could see you ! I wish I could know whether death came swiftly or slowly !'

Again he broke into curses. At length Duckworth spoke.

'I am interested in that sluice-gate,' he said, with studied carelessness. 'I will have a look at it.'

As he spoke, he dived easily to the bottom—the water was barely eight feet deep. Aguinaldo craned over to watch him. It was what Duckworth had hoped.

Bracing his feet firmly against the bottom, he crouched a moment ; then with a spring and a tremendous down-stroke of the arms, he leaped upwards, half his height out of the water, and in an instant was gripping the edge of the tank with both hands.

Aguinaldo might have dislodged his hold. Instead, he dashed to the wheel and spun it round. For a moment the downward drag of the rushing water on Duckworth's legs was sickening. Then the broad edge of the sluice-gate, heaved upwards by the Spaniard's mad energy, came against his feet. It gave him just the required purchase for his toes. The Spanish devil had saved his life.

With a spring, Duckworth was on the edge. The next moment, Aguinaldo was swung from the ground and sent hurling through the air into the tank, and so came the horror of it.

Duckworth had determined that he should die, but in good set fashion, after trial. It was not to be. The escaping water seized the wretched man in its merciless grip, and whirled him to his death. Duckworth frantically tore at the wheel. He could

not move it ; it was locked by some device. He flung himself on the edge, if by chance he might catch the man's hand. It was too late. There was a dreadful vision of staring eyes and wildly gripping hands—and the tank was empty.

Very white and shaken was Duckworth as he rode into camp to report himself, and Sir Edward Pakenham's face was scarcely less white by the time the tale was told.

' Major Duckworth ! ' he said, at length. ' You have disobeyed orders, but you have been dreadfully punished. On one condition will I overlook your fault. You will take a hundred men of your regiment, and you will report to me to-morrow morning that not one stone of that accursed place is left on another.'

CLAUDE E. BENSON.

WHAT OUR SOLDIERS READ.

BY BEATRICE HARRADEN.

ABOUT eighteen months ago Miss Elizabeth Robins and myself entered on our duties as Honorary Librarians to the Military Hospital, Endell Street, the only Military Hospital in England officered entirely by women. The doctor in charge is Dr. Flora Murray and the chief surgeon Dr. L. Garrett Anderson. There is a staff of fourteen doctors, including a pathological and an ophthalmic surgeon, a staff of thirty-six nursing sisters and ninety orderlies—all women. There are eighteen large wards, accommodating about 550 wounded.

We were asked to collect a number of suitable books and magazines, and by personal intercourse with the soldiers, to encourage reading amongst the men, and to do our best to help them through the long hours of illness and inaction by offering them books which would amuse and interest them. From the very onset it seemed an interesting project, but nothing like so stimulating and gratifying as it has proved itself to be. And it has struck me that a short record of our work may perhaps be acceptable to the reading public, and also useful in indicating what can be done in hospitals by the help of an organised Library Department.

We began by writing to our publisher friends, who, in generous response to our requests, sent us splendid consignments of volumes of fiction, travel, and biography and hundreds of magazines. Authors likewise rallied willingly to our aid. We were presented by a lady with an enormous bookcase, a dignified and imposing structure, which we planted in the Recreation Room, and regarded as a proud outward and visible sign of our official existence. Other bookcases followed and were soon filled, and we were still engaged in the heavy task of sorting and rejecting literally shoals of all sorts and conditions of books, when suddenly the hospital was opened and the men arrived from the front. It was remarkable what private people did send—and do still send. It was as if they had said to themselves : '*Here is a grand opportunity of getting rid of all our old, dirty, heavy book encumbrances.*' I never in my life remember being so dirty, nor so indignant. However, in due time we emerged triumphantly from this period of trial—a trial mitigated for us by

the generosity and understanding of other people who sent new books or money with which we were to buy books of our own choice. And we instituted at a very early date a system of sacks, in which we despatched all our good surplus matter either to one of the war libraries to be sent to the troops abroad or elsewhere, or to the Salvation Army, which was glad to collect old books and papers to be used for pulp.

We determined to have no red tape, and to leave all the book-cases unlocked at all times, so that the men who were able to move about could come and pick out what they liked. And we arranged to go into the wards and take books ourselves to the men who were confined to their beds. Our view was that we should give them what *they* wanted, not necessarily what *we* wanted for them. They were there for rest and recuperation, and we felt that we had no right to impose on them in their enfeebled condition books which would tax them unduly or depress their spirits. We had to remember that many of them at best have very little power of concentration, and of course still less in the suffering and shattered condition in which they arrive home. So our point was to take note of their different temperaments, and see what we could do for each separate individual.

We soon learnt that we had to invest in a large number of detective books, and any amount of Nat Gould's sporting stories. In fact, a certain type of man would read nothing except Nat Gould. However ill he was, however suffering and broken, the name of Nat Gould would always bring a smile to his face. Often and often I've heard the whispered words : '*A Nat Gould—ready for when I'm better.*'

We also had to get Garvice's books, and also Oppenheim's. But even at the beginning of our venture, we were by no means limited in opportunity to authors of any particular class. It was quite possible that one man in a ward would be reading, say, Nat Gould's 'Jockey Jack'—a great favourite—and the man in the next bed would be reading Shakespeare, or 'The Pilgrim's Progress,' or Shelley, or Meredith, Conrad, or the Encyclopædia. We found, in fact, so many different kinds of minds and upbringings, that we could never have remembered without the aid of a note-book what each man wanted.

So after various experiments, this became our system. We divided the wards between us, and went round with our note-book to each bedside, found out if our soldier cared to read, and, if he

had no suggestion to make, found out in a vague sort of way, without worrying him, of course, what he would be *likely* to want—if, indeed, he wanted anything at all. For in some cases the very thought of a book was apparently worse than a bomb. In instances like this, matches and cigarettes or tobacco served as a substitute for literature, and generally speaking as a natural concomitant too! Now and again we have had men who have never learnt to read at all. With one exception, these have invariably been miners.

One day our work took on a new phase, the development of which has been the source of great satisfaction, both to readers and librarians. We were asked for a book on high explosives. We made inquiries about the one in question, and found it cost eighteen shillings. That seemed a good deal to spend on one book for one person, but on mentioning this matter to our doctor in charge, we were told to go ahead and buy it, and also anything else that seemed to be wanted. This one incident fired us with the idea to find out what subjects the men were interested in, what had been their occupation before the war, or their plans for the future. And from that moment the work of the librarians became tenfold more interesting, and in some degree constructive.

We were asked for books on paper-making, printing, cabinet-making, engineering, marine engineering, veterinary work, Sheffield plate, old furniture, organic and inorganic chemistry, fish-curing, coal-mining, counterpoint, languages, meteorology, electricity, submarines, aeroplanes, flowers, trees, gardening, forestry, the Stone Age, painting and drawing, violin making, architecture, and so on. The fish-curing instance was particularly interesting. The soldier in question was from Nova Scotia, and his father's business was fish-curing. He was anxious to learn the English methods, and gain all the information he could during his sojourn in England, before he was invalided out of the army and returned to his home.

We have therefore made it our business to supply these various needs, and also to provide any weekly papers bearing on the different subjects in which the men are interested. Our Department could not, of course, be always buying costly books, but with the aid of our subscription to Mudie's, and by the help of friends who have come to the rescue and lent their valuable books to us for the special purpose which we have unfolded to them, we have been able so far to meet all demands; and this part of our work is increasing all the time. The Sheffield plate book lent us by a generous

antiquary was a perfect godsend to one of our crippled men. His business was that of a second-hand dealer, and he said it was a rare chance to get hold of that book and make copious notes from it which would be invaluable to him afterwards.

Turning aside from technical subjects to literature in general, I would like to say that although we have not ever attempted to force good books on our soldiers, we have of course taken great care to place them within their reach. And it is not an illusion to say that when the men once begin on a better class of book, they do not as a rule return to the old stuff which formerly constituted their whole range of reading. My own impression is that they read rubbish because they have had no one to tell them what to read. Stevenson, for instance, has lifted many a young soldier in our hospital on to a higher plane of reading whence he has looked down with something like scorn—which is really very funny—on his former favourites. For that group of readers, ‘Treasure Island’ has been a discovery in more senses than one, and to the librarians a boon unspeakable.

We have had, however, a large number of men who in any case care for good literature, and indeed would read nothing else. Needless to say, we have had special pleasure in trying to find them some book which they would be sure to like and which was already in our collection, or else in buying it, and thus adding to our stock. The publishers, too, have been most generous in sending us any current book which has aroused public interest and on which we have set our hearts. For we have tried to acquire not only standard works, but books of the moment bearing on the war, and other subjects too.

The following are items from two or three of our order books. The order books have been chosen at random, but the items are consecutive; and the list will give some idea of the nature of our pilgrimages from one bedside to another bedside, and from one ward to another.

One of Nat Gould’s novels; *Regiments at the Front*; Burns’s Poems; A book on bird life; ‘The Last Days of Pompeii’; *Strand Magazine*; *Strand Magazine*; *Wide World Magazine*; *The Spectator*; A scientific book; *Review of Reviews*; ‘By the Wish of a Woman’ (Marchmont); one of Rider Haggard’s; Marie Corelli; Nat Gould; Rider Haggard; Nat Gould; Nat Gould; Nat Gould; Good detective story; Something to make you laugh; *Strand Magazine*; Adventure story; ‘Tale of Two Cities’; ‘*Gil Blas*’;

Browning's Poems; Tolstoy's 'Resurrection'; Sexton Blake; 'Scarlet Pimpernel'; Nat Gould; *Wide World Magazine*; *Pearson's Magazine*; 'Arabian Nights'; Jack London; Shakespeare; Nat Gould; 'The Encyclopædia'; Rex Beach; Wm. Le Queux; *Strand Magazine*; Nat Gould; Something in the murder line; *Country Life*; *The Story Teller Magazine*; one of Oppenheim's novels; 'The Crown of Wild Olive'; 'Kidnapped'; Nat Gould; Shakespeare; Nat Gould; Silas Hocking; Oppenheim; Le Queux; Nat Gould; Nat Gould; Jack London; 'Handy Andy'; 'Kidnapped'; 'Treasure Island'; Book about rose growing; 'Montezuma's Daughter' (Rider Haggard); 'Prisoner of Zenda'; Macaulay's Essays; 'The Magnetic North' (Elizabeth Robins); Nat Gould; Sexton Blake; Modern High Explosives; 'Dawn' (Rider Haggard); 'Wild Animals'; Book on horse-breaking; 'Radiography'; 'Freckles' (by Gene Stratton-Porter); 'The Blue Lagoon'; 'Caged Birds'; 'The Corsican Brothers'; 'Sherlock Holmes'; French Dictionary; Kipling; 'Mysticism'; Nat Gould; 'Pilgrim's Progress'; 'Mystery of Cloomber' (Conan Doyle); and so on.

These are, of course, only a few items. I should say that on the whole, and leaving out entirely books on technical and special subjects, the authors most frequently asked for by the average soldier are: Nat Gould, Charles Garvice, Wm. Le Queux, Rider Haggard, Guy Boothby, Oppenheim, Rex Beach, Conan Doyle, Marie Corelli, Joseph and Silas Hocking, Jack London, Dickens, Mrs. Henry Wood, Kipling (whose 'Barrack Room Ballads' they learnt by heart), Dumas, Ian Hay, Baroness Orczy, and Hornung's 'Raffles.'

And very favourite books are those dealing with wild animals and their habits, with ferrets, rats, and birds, and all stories of adventure and travel, and of course detective stories.

The New Zealanders and Australians have always asked for books on England, and also for Bushranger stories, also for their own poets. And even before we began to pay special attention to technical subjects, all books on aeroplanes, submarines, electricity, and wireless telegraphy were much in request. An Encyclopædia was so much asked for that we wrote to Mr. Dent, who most kindly sent us the twelve volumes of the 'Everyman's Encyclopædia.' And they are always 'out.' Shakespeare holds his own surprisingly and encouragingly well.

The Society novel is never read, and we weeded it out to make

room for another class of book which would be in demand. We have been sometimes astonished by the kind of book asked for by some man who seemed to us a most unpromising reader. The puzzle has been solved when we learnt that he had seen it on the cinematograph. 'The Last Days of Pompeii' was one of the books asked for in these circumstances, and our soldier was literally riveted to it until he had finished it, when he passed it on to his neighbour as a sort of 'real find.' Similarly, 'Much Ado about Nothing' was asked for, and after that several volumes of Shakespeare were taken to that bedside. This experience certainly shows that the cinema has a great possibility of doing good as well as harm.

The magazines most in demand are *The Strand*, *The Windsor*, *Pearson's*, *The Wide World*, *The Red*, and a few others. But some of our readers have refused to be interested in any magazines except their own pet ones. One man, for instance, confined himself entirely to *Blackwood's*. He proudly preferred an old number of *Maga* to a current number of any other magazine on earth. A second man remained loyal to the *Review of Reviews*, and a third to *Land and Water*. Another was never satisfied with anything except *The Nineteenth Century*. Others have asked only for wretched little rags which one would wish to see perish off the face of the earth. But as time has gone on, these have been less and less asked for, and their place has been gradually taken by the *Sphere*, the *Graphic*, the *Tatler*, the *Illustrated London News*, and the *Sketch*—another instance of a better class of literature being welcomed and accepted if put within easy reach. In our case this has been made continuously possible by friends who have given subscriptions for both monthly and weekly numbers, and by others who send in their back numbers in batches, and by the publishers, who never fail us.

John Bull deserves a paragraph all to himself. The popularity of his paper is truly remarkable. The average soldier looks upon it as a sort of gospel; and new arrivals from the trenches are cheered up at once by the very sight of the well-known cover. Even if they are too ill to read it, they like to have it near them ready for the moment when returning strength gives them the incentive to take even a glance at some of its pages.

We have found that men who have not naturally been readers have acquired the habit of reading in our Hospital, and there have been many instances of men who have become out-patients asking for permission to continue to use the library. It has been one of

our great pleasures to see old friends strolling into the recreation room and picking out for themselves some book by an author whom they have learnt to know and appreciate. Another gratifying feature of the work has been the anxiety of many of our readers to have a book waiting for them after an operation, so that as soon as possible they may begin to read it and forget some of their pains and sufferings. In many instances the author or the subject has been deliberately chosen beforehand.

Our experiences, in fact, have tended to show that a library department organised and run by people who have some knowledge of books might prove to be a useful asset in any hospital, both military and civil, and be the means of affording not only amusement and distraction, but even definite education, induced of course, not insisted on. To obtain satisfactory results it would seem, however, that even a good and carefully chosen collection of books of all kinds does not suffice. In addition, an official librarian is needed who will supply the initiative, which in the circumstances is of necessity lacking, and whose duty it is to visit the wards, study the temperaments, inclinations, and possibilities of the patients, and thus find out by direct personal intercourse what will amuse, help, stimulate, lift—and heal.

LOST HORSES.

A MONTH or so after the traitor Maritz had made his flamboyant proclamation in German South-West Africa, a small body of mounted Union troops was operating in a district which may be described as 'somewhere near Upington.' Probably such secrecy of places and names is not at all necessary, but it lends an appropriate military flavour to the small events I describe. I may go so far as to say that the setting I have provided is fictitious, though similar events did, no doubt, occur in the operations against Maritz and Kemp and their heroes. The characters of the roan horse and of the boy Frikkie are true to life, and the small adventures did occur much as described, but in another country in South Africa and upon a different occasion. Accept the story as fiction, not as history; it will at any rate serve to throw a light upon one of the aspects of the fighting in that dry land, and it illustrates the close relationship between horse and man in that country of long distances and sparse population and infrequent water-holes. The conditions are the absolute antithesis of those in Flanders and the trenches.

The risk of losing his riding or pack animals is constantly present to the veld traveller. Fortunately it is seldom the cause of anything more troublesome than a temporary inconvenience, but there are occasions when serious hardships result, the loss of valuable time or of your animals, or risk to your own life. In most cases the loss of your beasts is due merely to the fact that they have strayed. They have, as a rule, either followed the lead of some restless animal who is making back for his stable, or else they have wandered away in search of grass or water.

A horse is less hardy than his hybrid half-brother, and more the slave of his belly. Thirst and hunger pinch him at once, and he is quick in search of comfort; he is therefore more likely to stop and suffer capture at the first patch of good grass he comes to. His superficial character, moreover, generally affords some indication both of the reason he has strayed and the direction he has taken. There are, however, a few horses who are inveterate and troublesome wanderers; they are generally old animals whose accumulated experience has developed a cunning foreign to their normal character. Such animals often possess an irritating facility

for choosing the most inconvenient time to stray and the most unlikely direction to go.

If horses are the most frequent offenders, their sins in this respect are seldom serious. In my own experience mules are more liable to travel back along the road they have come than horses ; they are more creatures of habit, their memory is more retentive, and they have greater natural intelligence. When a mule has acquired the habit of absenting himself from duty he is a perpetual trouble. The most malignant form of this disease occurs when the beast has developed an insatiable longing for one particular place, a definite goal from which nothing will turn him. This haven of his constant desire is generally the place where he was born, or where he passed the pleasant days of his absurd youth.

There are traits in most horses which, in conjunction with this foundation of congenital simplicity, go to make 'character.' Men who have dealt with horses in the less frequented parts of the earth know this well. They will remember one animal who had in a highly developed degree that instinctive correctness of demeanour which can best be described as good manners ; a second had a heart like a lion and checked at nothing ; another was a prey to an incurable nervousness ; while yet another was just simply mean. These mean horses are a perpetual menace ; you never know when they will let you down. Sometimes they are clearly actuated by malice ; sometimes, however, there is a subtle quality and timeliness in their apparent stupidity which gives you a horrid suspicion that you've been had, and that your horse is more of a rogue than a fool. Such an animal is always an old horse, never a young one.

I am not quite clear as to what a scout should look like. The typical scout of the North American Indian days, as exemplified in the person of Natty Bumppo, wore fringed buckskin and moccasins and coon-skin cap, while Texas Bill and his vivid companions had a more picturesque costume still, in which great silver-studded saddles and jingling spurs and monstrous revolvers bore a conspicuous part. I must confess that my own nine sportsmen were scrubby-looking fellows compared to their picturesque predecessors at the game. (The khaki trousers issued by an administration which was always more practical than picturesque do not lend themselves, in this generation at any rate, to romance.) But they were a hard and useful lot, much sunburnt, and with gnarled, scarred hands. Deerslayer himself probably could not have taught them much

about their own veld craft. Every one was South African born ; three of them were younger sons of loyal Boer farmers. One was a coloured boy, a quiet, capable fellow. He was with us nominally as a sort of groom, but his civil manners and extraordinary capacity soon won him an accepted place in the scouts ; though he rode and ate with us, he always sat a little apart in camp. He had spent three or four years up country, where I had first come across him in fact, and had shot some amount of big game ; he was excellent on spoor and had a wonderful eye for country, and I really think he was the quickest man on and off a horse, and the quickest and most brilliant shot I ever saw. He stood on the roster as Frederick Collins, but was never known by any other name than Frikkie.

The commandant of the rather nondescript commando, which was officially described, I believe, as a composite regiment, had a sound idea of the value of a few competent and well-mounted scouts, and had done us very well in the matter of horse. We had been 'on commando' now for nearly five weeks, and had got to know our animals pretty well. During the confusion and changes of the first fortnight I had got rid of a dozen horses I saw would be of no use for our work, though suitable, no doubt, for slower troop duty, and by a cunning process of selection had got together a very serviceable lot, with four spare animals to carry kit and water on the longer trips away from the main body. Your spirited young things, though well enough to go courting on, are apt to get leg-weary and drop condition too soon on steady work, and all my mob were aged and as hard as nails. I will describe one or two of them presently.

Things were getting a little exciting about that time. Three rebel commandos, or rather bands, were known to be in the neighbourhood, and it was essential to find out what their strength was and who their leaders were. There was not much reason to fear attack, for they were not well found in either guns or ammunition, and their ragamuffin cavalry were concerned to avoid and not invite a stand-up engagement. Rapidity of action was essential to the loyal troops, for the longer the rebellion dragged on the more risk there was of it spreading. It was necessary to find out at once the actual movements of these bands, and the best way of doing so was to keep tally of the water-holes. Men can, if necessary, carry water for themselves, but horses, especially those from the moist high veld of the Transvaal, must have water regularly or

they go to pieces very quickly in that dry, hot land. And so the remote and forgotten pit at Ramib had suddenly become of importance, and I had been told to send two men to examine it at once.

It lay within the rocky belt which came down south of the Orange River somewhat to our right ; it was supposed to be twenty miles away, but it might prove five miles less or ten miles more. It was known to have held water fifteen months before, and our business was to find out if it still held water, how long that water would be likely to last, and if any of the rebels had been to it recently. No one in the column was aware of its exact location, but I myself knew enough of those parts to guess roughly where it must lie. I decided to take one man and a pack-horse, and to take the patrol myself. No native guide was available, and the Colonel did not, for obvious reasons, care to make use of any of the few local Boers who carried on a wretched existence as farmers in that barren country.

My own horse was a big bay, an uncomfortable beast, but capable of covering much ground ; like many big men, he had little mental elasticity and no vices. Frikkie had an unassuming bay of ordinary manners and capacity, and with a natural aptitude for routine and a military life. The third horse was a king of his class. He did not belong to the scouts, but I had borrowed him to carry the pack on that patrol. He was mean all through ; in colour a sort of skewbald roan, and in character an irreclaimable criminal. He had a narrow chest, weedy white legs, and a pale shifty eye ; he was very free with his heels, and an inveterate malingerer. He had never carried a pack before and we were prepared for trouble, for his malevolent spirit had already acquired a wide reputation.

The patrol left the column a little before sunset, after a windless, baking day. The horses were in excellent fettle. The roan had given some trouble with the pack, but before he could throw himself down or buck through the lines he was hustled out of camp to an accompaniment of oaths and cheers in two languages. Once away and alone he went quietly, but doubtless with hate in his heart, for his beastly eye was full of gall.

Dawn found us hidden on the top of a low stony kopje, the horses tied together among the brown boulders below. It was bitter cold as the light grew, and the sun came up into an empty world. I waited there for half an hour, partly to find any signs of white men, and partly to work out the lay of the land and the

probable direction of the pit. Nothing was moving in the whole world. It was clear where the water must be. On the right was the usual barren desert country we had come through during the night, low ridges of stone and shale, and a thin low scrub of milk bush and cactus. On the left the land grew much rougher towards the river ; the rocky valleys stretched for miles in that direction. Presently we led the horses down off the kopje, and an hour later saw us looking down at the chain of small holes, still full of good water. I stayed with the hidden horses while Frikkie cut a circle round the pools. There was no sign of life, he reported, only the old sandal spoor of some natives ; no horse had been down to the water for weeks, probably for months. We off-saddled in a hidden corner some way from the water, and got a small fire going of thin dry sticks. The horses were given a drink and turned loose. It was criminal foolishness not to have hobbled or knee-haltered the roan, for ten minutes after they were let go Frikkie called out that the horses had completely disappeared.

One realised at once that there was no time to be lost. It was probable that the roan had led them away, and that he meant business. The saddles and pack were hurriedly hidden among some rocks with the billy of half-cooked rice, the fire was put out, and we took up the spoor.

It was soon evident that the animals were travelling, and were not straying aimlessly in search of feed. The spoor of the discoloured strawberry beast was always in front—his footprints were like his character, narrow and close. Above his tracks came those of Ruby, the police horse, round ordinary hoof-marks, and well shod ; my own horse's immense prints were always last, solid and unmistakable. Mile after mile the tracks led into a rockier and more barren country. What little stunted and thorny scrub there was had not yet come into leaf, and there was no shade and no sign of green anywhere. Ridges of sharp gravel and small kopjes of brown stone alternated with narrow valleys without sign of green or water. In the softer ground of these valleys the spoor was plain and could be followed without any trouble, but on the rocky ridges the tracks became difficult to hold where the horses had separated and wandered about. The trail led eastwards, into a rocky, waterless, and uninhabited country. There was no reason for the roan's choice but just native malice, for he had come from the west the previous day. Doubtless the main camp would be his ultimate destination, but it seemed apparent that he intended

to inflict as deep an injury as he could before he set his sour face again to the west.

It was within half an hour of sundown before I came up with the horses, and then only the two bays ; the roan's spoor showed that he had gone on about an hour before. They were standing under a bunch of thorn trees, the only shade they had passed since they were let go that morning. For the last mile or two the tracks, which had become more aimless as the hot afternoon wore on, had turned a little to the north. Probably, as the allegiance of his small following had weakened, the leader's thoughts had turned to the companionship of the camp, and when they had finally refused to follow him any further he had abandoned the rest of his revenge and had turned frankly for home.

We rounded up the two horses and thought of our camp, probably eight miles away in a direct line. Though they were tired and empty they would not be caught, and it was soon evident that they would not be driven either. I will not ask you to follow the dreadful hour which ensued. This crowning flicker of rebellion at the end of a disastrous day nearly broke our hearts. It was well after dark when we finally abandoned the horses in an area of steep rocky ridges and narrow valleys covered with cactus ; it was quite impossible to cope with them in the dark in such a country. We reached camp about ten, but were too tired and disappointed to make a fire. A tin of bully-beef, and the mass of opaque jelly which had once been good Patna rice, were the first pleasant incidents of a baking, hungry day.

The second day began before dawn with as large a breakfast as we could compass : black coffee, the little bread that was left, and a large quantity of rice. I have seldom eaten a more cheerless meal. Three or four pounds of rice, some coffee, a tin or two of bully, and a little sugar were all that remained to us, and there was no chance of getting more. I must confess that at this stage a tactical error was committed which cost us the long day's work for nothing. A golden rule where lost animals are concerned is to stick to the spoor, but as I thought it very probable that the horses would turn north and west again during the night and make for their last place of sojourn, I tried to save half a dozen hours by cutting the spoor ahead. It was nearly noon, and a mile or two beyond where the roan had left the others, before it became a certainty that the horses had done the unlikely thing, and had gone either south or further east into the broken country. At that

moment they were probably ten miles away. I then did what one should have done at first, and went to the point where we had last seen them. That afternoon was hotter and emptier than the last, and sunset found us on a cold spoor going north. We had wisely brought rice and coffee and water-bags with us that morning, and Frikkie had shot a klipspringer—baboons and klipspringer were the only animals we had seen the last two days. If you suppose that we had used any of the water for washing you are making a mistake, though Heaven knows that we both would have been the better for a bath. We slept on the spoor, and bitter cold it was without blankets ; there was not scrub enough for a decent fire.

Matters were getting serious. We were then twelve miles from the saddlery and, so far as we knew, the nearest water, and twenty more from the camp. If the horses were not found and caught that day they would have to be abandoned, and we would have to pad the hoof home *via* the disastrous pools at Ramib.

But fortune does not frown for ever ; it is a long worm that has no turning. Within an hour of sunrise we came into the quite fresh tracks of the horses crossing their own spoor. Frikkie exclaimed that there were three horses, and an examination showed the narrow tracks of the red horse with the other two ; they had not found water and were evidently on their way back to Ramib. We came on to the animals a few minutes afterwards. Except that they were hollow from want of water they were none the worse, and apparently they were not sorry to see us. By the time the sun was in the north they had had a good drink and were finishing the little grain in the pack. Midnight saw us riding into the main camp—only to find it deserted, for the column had marched. The camp was apparently completely empty, and it felt very desolate under a small moon. I expected I would discover a message of some sort for me at sunrise ; in the meantime the obvious thing was to keep out of the way, so I went half a mile off into the veld, and the boy and I kept watch by turn until dawn.

Nothing moved in or round the camp till near sunrise, when three men rode out of some shale ridges about a mile away on the opposite side, and came down to the water. By the white bands round the left arm—the sign of loyal troops—I knew them for our own men ; indeed we had recognised the horse one of them was riding. They gave me the message they had stayed behind to deliver. We were to stay and watch the camp site for three or

four days, and to patrol daily some distance to the south-east. The water was important, for it was quite probable that one or other of the rebel commandos would come to it. The men had hidden provisions for us and some grain for the horses ; they themselves were to hurry on to the column with our report of the Ramib pits. We rode a few miles along the column spoor with them, and then turned off on some gravelly ground and fetched a compass round back to the place in the shale ridges where the men had slept and where the provisions were. We took no more chances with the strawberry horse ; he was closely hobbled.

The loss of the animals had been a serious thing, and we were extremely fortunate to have got out of it so easily. It did not lessen the annoyance to realise that it was my own fault for not hobbling the roan, but only a rogue by constitution and habit would have carried his hostility to so dangerous a length. But within a week he was to provide another taste of his quality. This time nothing more serious was involved than the risk of his own loss, for we were never led far from water in so menacing and barren a country as that beyond Ramib.

Most of that day was spent in the stony krantz, from which a view could be obtained over the whole dry, grey landscape, and the pools a mile away. In normal times the laagte was frequently used for sheep grazing, but in these days of mobile and ever-hungry commandos the few farmers in the vicinity were grazing their meagre flocks nearer their homesteads. Except for a few wandering Griquas, and possibly a band of ragged rebels on tired horses, it was not likely that our watch would be interrupted. A rough shelter made of the stunted spiny scrub served as a sentry box ; the saddles were hidden in a narrow cleft on the lee side of the ridge, and the horses were kept down in the valleys.

In the afternoon we saddled up and rode south and east, keeping for the most part to the rough ridges, and overlooking the level country along which our column had come, and which was the natural approach from that side for any body of men having wheeled transport with them. We did not ride for more than an hour, but my glasses showed an empty, treeless world for miles beyond. If the commandos did come our way they would probably trek by night ; we should hear them arrive and laager about dawn, and sunrise would have seen us well on our way to our own men.

Just at dusk that evening we rode along the lee of the ridge upon which our poor home was. Frikkie was riding the roan.

He was leading his own animal, for a single horse could not be left grazing alone, to be picked up, perhaps, by any wandering rebel, or to stray off in search of companionship. When we passed under the highest point of the ridge I stopped and sent Frikkie to the top, for he could spy in both directions from there. I took the led horse from him, and he threw the roan's reins over the neck to trail on the ground—the accepted instruction to every trained veld horse to stand still. I watched the boy's slim figure against the sunset sky in the west as he turned about, searching the veld through his binoculars, though it was really getting too dark for prism glasses. He called out that nothing was moving, and presently came lightly down the steep slope in the gathering dusk. As he reached his horse the beast turned his quarters to him and walked away; the boy walked round, but again the horse turned away; and when I put my horse across to check him he lifted his head and trotted off. We knew that we couldn't catch the beast if his views on the matter did not coincide with ours, so we walked on the half-mile to where the skerm was, thinking the horse would follow up his mates at his leisure.

This was a new, but not unexpected, trait in an already depraved character. Some horses, though they are inveterate strayers, are easy to catch when you do come up with them; others are very difficult to catch, though they seldom go more than a mile from the camp; this hectic degenerate apparently combined both these bad habits.

An hour after dark the horse had not turned up, though our own reliable animals were knee-halter'd and turned loose for a time with their nosebags on as decoys. At dawn he was not visible in any of the shallow valleys we could see to the east of the ridge; and to our surprise and concern he was not in the valley where the water was and where the camp had been.

Our own horses were knee-halter'd short and let go, and we spent a careful hour examining the margin of the pool, but there was no narrow spoor to show that the roan had been down to drink during the night. I spent the morning with our horses and on the look-out, while the boy cut a wide semicircle round to the south and west of the water. He came in at mid-day, certain that the truant had not gone out in those directions. Then Frikkie took over the sentry work, and I set out to cover the remainder of the circle. I worked methodically along the soft ground of the valleys outside the range of the area already fouled by the spoor

of our own animals, and where I would find the roan's tracks at once. From time to time I climbed one of the low ridges, for the boy was to spread a light-coloured saddle blanket over a prominent rock on the side away from the water as a signal if he saw either the lost horse or anyone approaching from the south, or in case of other danger. Nothing occurred during the long, hot afternoon.

That evening, when I got back to camp, I found two Griquas sitting over the coals with Frikkie. They said they were shepherds, and they may have done a little of that congenial work recently, but they looked to me more like sheep-stealers. They were wild people from the Orange River, and I was sure they had never been any sort of farm labourers. However, they were friendly enough and promised help in the morning. The horse had then been without water since the morning of the previous day. He had not strayed away, for at sunset he must have been still within four or five miles of the camp ; if he had intended business we would have cut his outgoing spoor during the day. Horses were too valuable in that country and at that time for the loss of even such a three-cornered abomination as the pink horse to be taken lightly.

Morning showed that the horse had not been to the water during the night. He had then been forty-eight hours without water. The only thing was to take up the spoor where the animal had last been seen, and so stick to it till he was found. The Kalahari bushmen have the reputation of being the finest trackers in South Africa, but these two cross-bred Griqua bushmen gave us an incomparable exhibition of skill. I have had some experience of that game, and Frikkie was a master, but these savages astonished us.

Inch by inch the spoor was picked out from that of the other animals. No proved mark was abandoned until the next was certified, often only an inch or two away. The only slight help they had was the rare and very faint mark where the trailing reins had touched the ground. The first hundred yards took probably an hour to cover, but when the spoor reached comparatively clean ground the work was easier. At this point Frikkie got the water-bags and some food and joined the bushmen, for it was possible that the horse, driven by thirst, had taken it into his head to travel far during the previous night.

Late that evening the trackers returned with the horse. He was emaciated and weak, but otherwise quite well, though for some days his back was tender from the continual 'sweating' of the saddle blanket. His spoor showed that he had spent the first

night and day wandering about the low ridges and hollows not far from our camp, and that the night before he had commenced to journey away into the empty country to the east. Somewhere about dawn of that third day his trailing reins had hooked up on one of the few bushes in that country strong enough to hold him, and there he was found by the bushmen, the picture of a natural misery, and too dejected to take much notice of his rescuers. Nothing but his own gloomy thoughts had prevented him from going down to the water at any time, or to the companionship of our camp.

Thirty-six hours after this we were back with the main column. It is not necessary to add that we were glad to get a bath and a generous meal, and that I took the first opportunity of handing over the parti-coloured strawberry to troop duty.

In the first of these two offences it is clear that the white-legged roan was animated by spite. Such malevolence is rare enough, but his second performance is much more remarkable. I offer three alternative explanations. The first is that it was just stupidity. I have the poorest opinion of the intelligence of the horse, as distinct from instinct. It is Professor Lloyd Morgan, I think, who defines instinct as 'the sum of inherited habits,' and this may be accepted as a sound definition. Elementary necessity, to say nothing of instinct or intelligence, should have driven him to the water soon after he had obtained his freedom. He could not have forgotten where the water was. If his normal mental process was so dislocated by the fact of the saddle on his back without the presence of the masterful human in it, then he was a fool of the first class.

The second solution I offer is that his action was prompted by roguery; for even a very limited intelligence would have warned him that he would be captured if he ventured near either the water or the camp. It may be that when his reins hooked up he was on his way to the free water at Ramib. The third explanation is that he was a little daft. In a long and varied experience of horses I cannot really remember one so afflicted, though I had a pack-mule once that I am certain was a harmless lunatic. You may take your choice of these alternatives; for my part I incline to the second.

John Ridd's rustic wisdom led him to express the opinion, upon the memorable occasion when John Fry was bringing him home from Blundell's School at Tiverton, that 'a horse (like a woman) lacks, and is better without, self-reliance.'

R. T. CORYNDON.

'THE PROGRESS OF PICKERSDYKE.'

SECOND LIEUTENANT WILLIAM PICKERSDYKE, sometime quartermaster-sergeant of the —th Battery and now adjutant of a divisional ammunition column, stared out of the window of his billet and surveyed the muddy and uninteresting village street with eyes of gloom. His habitual optimism had for once failed him, and his confidence in the gospel of efficiency had been shaken. For Fate, in the portly guise of his fatuous old colonel, had intervened to balk the fulfilment of his most cherished desire. Pickersdyke had that morning applied for permission to be transferred to his old battery if a vacancy occurred, and the colonel had flatly declined to forward the application.

Now one of the few military axioms which have not so far been disproved in the course of this war is the one which lays down that second lieutenants must not argue with colonels. Pickersdyke had left his commanding officer without betraying the resentment which he felt, but in the privacy of his own room, however, he allowed himself the luxury of vituperation.

'Blooming old woman!' he said aloud. 'Incompetent, rusty old dug-out! Thinks he's going to keep me here running his bally column for ever, I suppose. Selfish, that's what 'e is—and lazy too.'

In spite of the colonel's pompous reference to 'the exigencies of the service,' that useful phrase which covers a multitude of minor injustices, Pickersdyke had legitimate cause for grievance. Nine months previously, when he had been offered a commission, he had had to choose between Sentiment, which bade him refuse and stay with the battery to whose well-being he had devoted seven of the best years of his life, and Ambition, which urged him, as a man of energy and brains, to accept his just reward with a view to further advancement. Ambition, backed by his major's promise to have him as a subaltern later on, had vanquished. Suppressing the inevitable feeling of nostalgia which rose in him, he had joined the divisional ammunition column, prepared to do his best in a position wholly distasteful to him.

In an army every unit depends for its efficiency upon the system of discipline inculcated by its commander, aided by the spirit of individual enthusiasm which pervades its members; the less the

enthusiasm the sterner must the discipline be. Now a D.A.C., as it is familiarly called, is not, in the inner meaning of the phrase, a cohesive unit. In peace it exists only on paper ; it is formed during mobilisation by the haphazard collection of a certain number of officers, mostly 'dug-outs' ; close upon 500 men, nearly all reservists ; and about 700 horses, many of which are rejections from other and, in a sense, more important units. Its business, as its name indicates, is to supply a division with ammunition, and its duties in this connection are relatively simple. Its wagons transport shells, cartridges, and bullets to the brigade ammunition columns, whence they return empty and begin again. It is obvious that the men engaged upon this work need not, in ordinary circumstances, be heroes ; it is also obvious that their rôle, though fundamentally an important one, does not tend to foster an intense *esprit de corps*. A man can be thrilled at the idea of a charge or of saving guns under a hurricane of fire, but not with the monotonous job of loading wagons and then driving them a set number of miles daily along the same straight road. A stevedore or a carter has as much incentive to enthusiasm for his work.

The commander of a D.A.C., therefore, to ensure efficiency in his unit, must be a zealous disciplinarian with a strong personality. But Pickersdyke's new colonel was neither. The war had dragged him from a life of slothful ease to one of bustle and discomfort. Being elderly, stout, and constitutionally idle, he had quickly allowed his early zeal to cool off, and now, after six months of the campaign, the state of his command was lamentable. To Pickersdyke, coming from a battery with proud traditions and a high reputation, whose members regarded its good name in the way that a son does that of his mother, it seemed little short of criminal that such laxity should be permitted. On taking over a section he 'got down to it,' as he said, at once, and became forthwith a most unpopular officer. But that, though he knew it well, did not deter him. He made the lives of various sergeants and junior N.C.O.s unbearable until they began to see that it was wiser 'to smarten themselves up a bit' after his suggestion. In a month the difference between his section and the others was obvious. The horses were properly groomed and had begun to improve in their condition—before, they had been poor to a degree ; the sergeant-major no longer grew a weekly beard nor smoked a pipe during stable hour ; the number of the defaulters, which under

the new régime was at first large, had dwindled to a negligible quantity. In two months that section was for all practical purposes a model one, and Pickersdyke was able to regard the results of his unstinted efforts with satisfaction.

The colonel, who was not blind where his own interests were concerned, sent for Pickersdyke one day and said :

' You've done very well with your section ; it's quite the best in the column now.'

Pickersdyke was pleased ; he was as modest as most men, but he appreciated recognition of his merits. Moreover, for his own ends, he was anxious to impress his commanding officer. He was less pleased when the latter continued :

' I'm going to post you to No. 3 Section now, and I hope you'll do the same with that.'

No. 3 Section was notorious. Pickersdyke, if he had been a man of Biblical knowledge (which he was not), would have compared himself to Jacob, who waited seven years for Rachel and then was tricked into taking Leah. The vision of his four days' leave—long overdue—faded away. He foresaw a further and still more difficult period of uncongenial work in front of him. But, having no choice, he was obliged to acquiesce.

Once again he began at the beginning, instilling into unruly minds the elementary notions that orders are given to be obeyed, that the first duty of a mounted man is to his horses, and that personal cleanliness and smartness in appearance are military virtues not beneath notice. This time the drudgery was even worse, and he was considerably hampered by the touchiness and jealousy of the real section commander, who was a dug-out captain of conspicuous inability. There was much unpleasantness, there was at one time very nearly a mutiny, and there were not a few courts-martial. It was three months and a half before that section found, so to speak, its military soul.

And then the colonel, satisfied that the two remaining sections were well enough commanded to shift for themselves if properly guided, seized his chance and made Pickersdyke his adjutant. Here was a man, he felt, endowed with an astonishing energy and considerable powers of organisation, the very person, in fact, to save his commanding officer trouble and to relieve him of all real responsibility.

This occurred about the middle of July. From then until

well on into September, Pickersdyke remained a fixture in a small French village on the lines of communication, miles from the front, out of all touch with his old comrades, with no distractions and no outlet for his energies except work of a purely routine character.

'It might be peace-time and me a bloomin' clerk' was how he expressed his disgust. But he still hoped, for he believed that to the efficient the rewards of efficiency come in due course and are never long delayed. Without being conceited, he was perhaps more aware of his own possibilities than of his limitations. In the old days in his battery he had been the major's right-hand man and the familiar (but always respectful) friend of the subalterns. In the early days of the war he had succeeded amazingly where others in his position had certainly failed. His management of affairs 'behind the scenes' had been unsurpassed. Never once, from the moment when his unit left Havre till a month later it arrived upon the Aisne, had its men been short of food or its horses of forage. He had replaced deficiencies from some apparently inexhaustible store of 'spares'; he had provided the best billets, the safest wagon lines, the freshest bread with a consistency that was almost uncanny. In the darkest days of the retreat he had remained unperturbed, 'pinching' freely when blandishments failed, distributing the comforts as well as the necessities of life with a lavish hand and an optimistic smile. His wits and his resource had been tested to the utmost. He had enjoyed the contest (it was his nature to do that), and he had come through triumphant and still smiling.

During the stationary period on the Aisne, and later in Flanders, he had managed the wagon line—that other half of a battery which consists of almost everything except the guns and their complement of officers and men—practically unaided. On more than one occasion he had brought up ammunition along a very dangerous route at critical moments.

He received his commission late in December, at a time when his battery was out of action, 'resting.' He dined in the officers' mess, receiving their congratulations with becoming modesty and their drink without unnecessary reserve. It was on this occasion that he had induced his major to promise to get him back. Then he departed, sorrowful in spite of all his pride in being an officer, to join the column. There, in the seclusion of his billet, he studied army lists and watched the name of the senior subaltern of the

battery creep towards the head of the roll. When that officer was promoted captain there would be a vacancy, and that vacancy would be Pickersdyke's chance. Meanwhile, to fit himself for what he hoped to become, he spent whole evenings poring over manuals of telephony and gun-drill ; he learnt by heart abstruse passages of Field Artillery Training ; he ordered the latest treatises on gunnery, both practical and theoretical, to be sent out to him from England ; and he even battled valiantly with logarithms and a slide-rule. . . .

From all the foregoing it will be understood how bitter was his disappointment when his application to be transferred was refused. His colonel's attitude astonished him. He had expected recognition of that industry and usefulness of which he had given unchallengeable proof. But the colonel, instead of saying :

' You have done well ; I will not stand in your way, much as I should like to keep you,' merely observed,

' I'm sorry, but you cannot be spared.'

And he made it unmistakably plain that what he meant was :

' Do you think I'm such a fool as to let you go ? I'll see you damned first ! '

Thus it was that Pickersdyke, a disillusioned and a baffled man, stared out of the window with wrath and bitterness in his heart. For he wanted to go back to ' the old troop ' ; he was obsessed with the idea almost to the exclusion of everything else. He craved for the old faces and the old familiar atmosphere as a drug-maniac craves for morphia. It was his right, he had earned it by nine months of drudgery—and who the devil, anyway, he felt, was this old fool to thwart him ?

Extravagant plans for vengeance flitted through his mind. Supposing he were to lose half a dozen wagons or thousands of rounds of howitzer ammunition, would his colonel get sent home ? Not he—he'd blame his adjutant, and the latter would quite possibly be court-martialled. Should he hide all the colonel's clothes and only reveal their whereabouts when the application had been forwarded ? Should he steal his whisky (without which it was doubtful if he could exist), put poison in his tea, or write an anonymous letter to headquarters accusing him of espionage ? He sighed—ingenuity, his valuable ally on many a doubtful occasion, failed him now. Then it occurred to him to appeal to one Lorrison, who was the captain of his old battery, and whom he had known for years as one of his subalterns.

'DEAR LORRISON,' he wrote, 'I've just had an interview with my old man and he won't agree to my transfer. I'm afraid it's a wash-out unless something can be done quickly, as I suppose Jordan will be promoted very soon.' (Jordan was the senior subaltern.) 'You know how much I want to get back in time for the big show. Can you do anything? Sorry to trouble you, and now I must close.'

'Yours,
'W. PICKERSDYKE.'

Then he summoned his servant. Gunner Scupham was an elderly individual with grey hair, a dignified deportment, and a countenance which suggested extreme honesty of soul but no intelligence whatsoever. Which fact was of great assistance to him in the perpetration of his more complicated villainies. He had not been Pickersdyke's storeman for many years for nothing. His devotion was a by-word, but his familiarity was sometimes a little startling.

'E won't let us go,' announced Pickersdyke.

'Strafe the blighter!' replied Scupham feelingly. 'I'm proper fed up with this 'ere column job.'

'Get the office bike, take this note to Captain Lorrison, and bring back an answer. Here's a pass.'

Scupham departed, grumbling audibly. It meant a fifteen-mile ride, the day was warm, and he disliked physical exertion. He returned late that evening with the answer, which was as follows:

'DEAR PICKERS,—Curse your fool colonel. Jordan may go any day, and if we don't get you we'll probably be stuck with some child who knows nothing. Besides, we want you to come. The preliminary bombardment is well under way, so there's not much time. Meet me at the B.A.C.¹ headquarters to-morrow evening at 8 and we'll fix up something. In haste,

'Yours ever,
'T. LORRISON.'

There are people who do not believe in luck. But if it was not luck which assisted Pickersdyke by producing the events which followed his receipt of that note, then it was Providence in a genial and most considerate mood. He spent a long time trying to think of a reasonable excuse for going to see Lorrison, but he might have saved himself the trouble. Some light-hearted

¹ Brigade Ammunition Column.

fool had sent up shrapnel instead of high explosive to the very B.A.C. that Pickersdyke wanted to visit. Angry telephone messages were coming through, and the colonel at once sent his adjutant up to offer plausible explanations.

Pickersdyke covered a lot of ground that afternoon. It was necessary to find an infuriated artillery brigadier and persuade him that the error was not likely to occur again, and was in any case not really the fault of the D.A.C. section commander. It was then necessary to find this latter and make it clear to him that he was without doubt the most incompetent officer in the allied forces, and that the error was entirely due to his carelessness. And it was essential to arrange for forwarding what was required.

Lorrison arrived punctually and evidently rather excited.

‘What price the news?’ he said at once.

Pickersdyke had heard none. He had been far too busy.

‘We’re for it at last—going to bombard all night till 4.30 A.M.—every bally gun in the army as far as I can see. And we’ve got orders to be ready to move in close support of the infantry if they get through. *To move!* Just think of that after all these months.’

Pickersdyke swore as he had not done since he was a rough-riding bombardier.

‘And that’s boxed *my* chances,’ he ended up.

‘Wait a bit,’ said Lorrison. ‘There’s a vacancy waiting for you if you’ll take it. We got pretty badly “crumped”¹ last night. The Bosches put some big “hows” and a couple of “pip-squeak” batteries on to us just when we were replenishing. They smashed up several wagons and did a lot of damage. Poor old Jordan got the devil of a shaking—he was thrown about ten yards. Lucky not to be blown to bits, though. Anyway, he’s been sent to hospital.’

He looked inquiringly at Pickersdyke. The latter’s face portrayed an unholy joy.

‘Will I take his place?’ he cried. ‘Lummy! I should think I would. Don’t care what the colonel says afterwards. When can I join? Now?’

‘As soon as I’ve seen about getting some more wagons from the B.A.C. we’ll go up together,’ answered Lorrison.

Pickersdyke, who had no conscience whatever on occasions such as this, sent a message to his colonel to say that he was staying

¹ Shelled.

up for the night (he omitted to say precisely where!), as there would be much to arrange in the morning. To Scupham he wrote:

'Collect all the kit you can and come up to the battery at once.
Say nothing.'

He was perfectly aware that he was doing a wildly illegal thing. He felt like an escaped convict breathing the air of freedom and making for his home and family. Forty colonels would not have stopped him at that moment.

* * * * *

II.

The major commanding the —th Battery sat in his dug-out examining a large-scale trench map. His watch, carefully synchronised with those of the staff, lay on the table in front of him. Outside, his six guns were firing steadily, each concussion (and there were twelve a minute) shaking everything that was not a fixture in the little room. Hundreds of guns along miles of front and miles of depth were taking part in the most stupendous bombardment yet attempted by the army. From 'Granny,' the enormous howitzer that fired six times an hour at a range of seventeen thousand yards, to machine guns in the front line trenches, every available piece of ordnance was adding its quota to what constituted a veritable hell of noise.

The major had been ordered to cut the wire entanglements between two given points and to stop firing at 4.30 A.M. precisely. He had no certain means of knowing whether he had completed his task or not. He only knew that his 'lines of fire,' his range, and his 'height of burst' as previously registered in daylight were correct, that his layers could be depended upon, and that he had put about a thousand rounds of shrapnel into a hundred and fifty yards of front. At 4.29 he rose and stood, watch in hand, in the doorway of his dug-out. A man with a megaphone waited at his elbow. The major, war-worn though he was, was still young enough in spirit to be thrilled by the mechanical regularity of his battery's fire. This perfection of drill was his work, the result of months and months of practice, of loving care, and of minute attention to detail.

Dawn was beginning to creep into the sky, and he could just distinguish the silhouettes of the two right-hand guns. The

flash as one of them fired revealed momentarily the figures of the gunners grouped round the breech like demons round some spectral engine of destruction. Precisely five seconds afterwards a second flash denoted that the next gun had fired—and so on in sequence from right to left until it was the turn of Number One again.

'Stop,' said the major when the minute hand of his watch was exactly over the half-hour.

'Stop!' roared the man with the megaphone.

It was as if the order had been heard all along the entire front. The bombardment ceased almost abruptly, and rifle and machine-gun fire became audible again. On a colossal scale the effect was that of the throttling down of a powerful motor-car whose engine had been allowed to race. Then, not many moments afterwards, from far away to the eastward there came faint, confused sounds of shouts and cheering. It was the infantry, the long-suffering, tenacious, wonderful infantry charging valiantly into the cold grey dawn along the avenues prepared by the guns. . . .

For Pickersdyke it had been a night of pure joy, unspoilt by any qualms of conscience. He had been welcomed at the battery as a kind of returned wanderer and given a section of guns at once. The major—who feared no man's wrath, least of all that of a dug-out D.A.C. commander—had promised to back him up if awkward questions were asked. Pickersdyke had only one cause for disappointment—the whole thing had gone too smoothly. He was bursting with technical knowledge, he could have repaired almost any breakdown, and had kept a keen look-out for all ordinary mistakes. But nothing went wrong and no mistakes were made. In this battery the liability of human error had been reduced to a negligible minimum. Pickersdyke had had nothing further to do than to pass orders and see that they were duly received. Nevertheless he had loved every moment of it, for he had come into his own—he was back in the old troop, taking part in a 'big show.' As he observed to the major whilst they were drinking hot coffee in the dug-out afterwards :

'Even if I do get court-martialled for desertion, sir, that last little lot was worth it!'

And he grinned as does a man well pleased with the success of his schemes. To complete his satisfaction, Scupham appeared soon afterwards bringing up a large bundle of kit and a few luxuries in the way of food. It transpired that he had presented himself to the last-joined subaltern of the D.A.C. and had bluffed that

perplexed and inexperienced officer into turning out a cart to drive him as far as the battery wagon line, whence he had come up on an ammunition wagon.

It was almost daylight when the battery opened fire again, taking its orders by telephone now from the F.O.O.,¹ who was in close touch with the infantry and could see what was happening. The rate of fire was slow at first; then it suddenly quickened, and the range was increased by a hundred yards. Some thirty shells went shrieking on their mission and then another fifty yards were added. The infantry was advancing steadily, and just as steadily, sixty or seventy yards in front of their line, the curtain of protecting shrapnel crept forward after the retiring enemy. At one point the attack was evidently held up for a while; the battery changed to high explosive and worked up to its maximum speed, causing Lorrisson to telephone imploring messages for more and still more ammunition. . . .

The long-expected order to advance, when at last it came, nearly broke the major's heart.

'Send forward one section,' it said, 'in close support of the 2nd Battalion —shire Regiment, to the advanced position previously prepared in J. 12.'

One section was only a third of his battery; he would have to stay behind, and he had been dreaming nightly of this dash forward with the infantry into the middle of things; he had had visions of that promised land, the open country beyond the German lines, of an end to siege warfare and a return to the varying excitement of a running fight. But orders were orders, so he sent for Pickersdyke.

'I'm going to send you,' he said after showing him the order, 'although you haven't seen the position before. But the other lad is too young for this job. Look here.'

He pointed out the exact route to be followed, showed him where bridges for crossing the trenches had been prepared, and explained everything in his usual lucid manner. Then he held out his hand.

'Good-bye and good luck,' he said. Their eyes met for a moment in a steady gaze of mutual esteem and affection. For they knew each other well, these two men—the gentleman born to lead and to inspire, and his ranker subordinate (a gentleman too in all that matters) highly trained, thoroughly efficient, utterly devoted. . . .

¹ Forward Observing Officer.

There was not a prouder man in the army than Pickersdyke at the moment when he led his section out from the battery position amid the cheers of those left behind. His luck, so he felt, was indeed amazing. He had about a mile to go along a road that was congested with troops and vehicles of all sorts. He blasphemed his way through (there is no other adequate means of expressing his progress) with his two guns and four wagons until he reached the point where he had to turn off to make for his new position. This latter had been carefully prepared beforehand by fatigue parties sent out from the battery at night. Gun-pits had been dug, access made easy, ranges and angles noted down in daylight by an officer left behind expressly for the purpose; and the whole had been neatly screened from aerial observation. It lay a few hundred yards behind what had been the advanced British trenches. But it was not a good place for guns; it was only one in which they might be put if, as now, circumstances demanded the taking of heavy risks.

Pickersdyke halted his little command behind the remains of a spinney and went forward to reconnoitre. He was still half a mile from his goal, which lay on a gentle rise on the opposite side of a little valley. Allowing for rough ground and deviations from the direct route owing to the network of trenches which ran in all directions, he calculated that it would take him at least ten minutes to get across. Incidentally he noticed that quite a number of shells were falling in the area he was about to enter. For the first time he began to appreciate the exact nature of his task. He returned to the section and addressed his men thus:

'Now, you chaps, it's good driving what's wanted here. We must get the guns there whatever happens—we'll let down the infantry else. Follow me and take it steady, . . . Terr-ot.'

The teams and carriages jingled and rattled along behind him as he led them forward. Smooth going, the signal to gallop, and a dash for it would have been his choice, but that was impossible. Constantly he was forced to slow down to a walk and dismount the detachments to haul on the drag-ropes. The manœuvre developed into a kind of obstacle race, with death on every side. But his luck stood by him. He reached the position with the loss only of a gunner, two drivers, and a pair of lead horses.

As soon as he had got his guns into action and his teams away (all of which was done quietly, quickly, and without confusion—'as per book' as he expressed it) Pickersdyke crawled up a

communication trench, followed by a telephonist laying a wire, until he reached a place where he could see. It was the first time that he had been so close up to the firing line, and he experienced the sensations of a man who looks down into the crater of a live volcano. Somewhere in the midst of the awful chaos in front of him was, if it still existed at all, the infantry battalion he was supposed to have been sent to support. But how to know where or when to shoot was altogether beyond him. He poked his glasses cautiously through a loophole and peered into the smoke in the vain hope of distinguishing friend from foe.

'What the hell shall I do now?' he muttered. 'Can't see no bloomin' target in this lot. . . . Crikey! yes, I can, though,' he added. 'Both guns two degrees more left, fuze two, eight hundred . . .' He rattled off his orders as if to the manner born. The telephonist, a man who had spent months in the society of forward observing officers, repeated word for word into his instrument, speaking as carefully as the operator in the public call office at Piccadilly Circus.

The guns behind blazed and roared. A second afterwards two fleecy balls of white smoke, out of which there darted a tongue of flame, appeared in front of the solid grey wall of men which Pickersdyke had seen rise as if from the earth itself and surge forward. A strong enemy counter-attack was being launched, and he, with the luck of the tyro, had got his guns right on to it. Methodically he switched his fire up and down the line. Great gaps appeared in it, only to be quickly filled. It wavered, sagged, and then came on again. Back at the guns the detachments worked till the sweat streamed from them; their drill was perfect, their rate of fire the maximum. But the task was beyond their powers. Two guns were not enough. Nevertheless the rush, though not definitely stopped, had lost its full driving force. It reached the captured trenches (which the infantry had had no time to consolidate), it got to close quarters, but it did not break through. The wall of shrapnel had acted like a breakwater—the strength of the wave was spent ere it reached its mark—and like a wave it began to ebb back again. In pursuit, cheering, yelling, stabbing, mad with the terrible lust to kill and kill and kill, came crowds of khaki figures.

Pickersdyke, who had stopped his fire to avoid hitting his own side and was watching the fight with an excitement such as he had never hoped to know, saw that the critical moment was

past ; the issue was decided, and his infantry were gaining ground again. He opened fire once more, lengthening his range so as to clear the *mêlée* and yet hinder the arrival of hostile reserves, which was a principle he had learnt from a constant study of 'the book.'

Suddenly there were four ear-splitting cracks over his head, and a shower of earth and stones rattled down off the parapet a few yards from him.

'We're for it now,' he exclaimed.

He was. This first salvo was the prelude to a storm of shrapnel from some concealed German battery which had at last picked up the section's position. But Pickersdyke continued to support his advancing infantry. . . .

'Wire's cut, sir,' said the telephonist suddenly.

It was fatal. It was the one thing Pickersdyke had prayed would not happen, for it meant the temporary silencing of his guns.

'Mend it and let me know when you're through again,' he ordered. 'I'm going down to the section.' And, stooping low, he raced back along the trench.

At the guns it had been an unequal contest, and they had suffered heavily. The detachments were reduced to half their strength, and one wagon, which had received a direct hit, had been blown to pieces.

'Stick it, boys,' said Pickersdyke after a quick look round. He saw that if he was to continue shooting it would be necessary to stand on the top of the remaining wagon in order to observe his fire. And he was determined to continue. He climbed up and found that the additional four feet or so which he gained in height just enabled him to see the burst of his shells. But he had no protection whatever.

'Add a hundred, two rounds gun-fire,' he shouted—and the guns flashed and banged in answer to his call. But it was a question of time only. Miraculously, for almost five minutes he remained where he was, untouched. Then, just as the telephonist reported 'through' again the inevitable happened. An invisible hand, so it seemed to Pickersdyke, endowed with the strength of twenty blacksmiths, hit him a smashing blow with a red-hot sledge-hammer on the left shoulder. He collapsed on to the ground behind his wagon with the one word '*Hell!*' And then he fainted. . . .

At 8 p.m. that night the —th Battery received orders to join up with its advanced section and occupy the position permanently.

It was after nine when Lorrison, stumbling along a communication trench and beginning to think that he was lost, came upon the remnants of Pickersdyke's command. They were crouching in one of the gun-pits—a bombardier and three gunners, very cold and very miserable. Two of them were wounded. Lorrison questioned them hastily and learnt that Pickersdyke was at his observing station, that Scupham and the telephonist were with him, and that there were two more wounded men in the next pit.

'The battery will be here soon,' said Lorrison cheerily, 'and you'll all get fixed up. Meanwhile here's my flask and some sandwiches.'

'Beg pardon, sir,' said the bombardier, 'but Mr. Pickersdyke 'll need that flask. 'E's pretty bad, sir, I believe.'

Lorrison found Pickersdyke lying wrapped in some blankets which Scupham had fetched from the wagon, twisting from side to side and muttering a confused string of delirious phrases. 'Fuze two—more *right* I said—damn them, they're still advancing—what price the old —th now? . . .' and then a groan and he began again.

Scupham, in a husky whisper, was trying to soothe him. 'Lie still for Gawd's sake and don't worry yourself,' he implored.

By the time Lorrison had examined the bandages on Pickersdyke's shoulder and administered morphia (without a supply of which he now never moved) the battery arrived, and with it some stretcher-bearers. Pickersdyke, just before he was carried off, recovered consciousness and recognised Lorrison, who was close beside him.

'Hullo!' he said in a weak voice. 'Nice box-up here, isn't it? But I reckon we got a bit of our own back 'fore we was knocked out. Tell the major the men were just grand. Oh! and before I forget, amongst my kit there's a few "spares" I've collected; they might come in handy for the battery. I shan't be away long, I hope. . . . Wonder what the old colonel will say. . . .' His voice trailed off into a drowsy murmur—the morphia had begun to take effect. . . .

Lorrison detained Scupham in order to glean more information.

'After 'e got 'it, sir,' said Scupham, 'e lay still for a bit, 'arf an hour pr'aps, and 'ardly seemed to know what was 'appenning. Then 'e suddenly calls out: "Is that there telephone workin' yet?" "Yes, sir," I says—and with that 'e made for to stand up, but 'e couldn't. So wot does 'e do then but makes me bloomin'

well carry 'im up the trench to the observin' station. "Now then, Scupham," 'e says, "prop me up by that loophole so I can see wot's comin' off." And I 'ad to 'old 'im there pretty near all the afternoon while 'e kep' sending orders down the telephone and firing away like 'ell. We finished our ammunition about five o'clock, and then 'e lay down where 'e was to rest for a bit. 'Ow 'e'd stuck it all that time with a wound like that Gawd only knows. 'E went queer in 'is 'ead soon after and we thought 'e was a goner—and then nothin' much 'appened till you came up, sir, 'cept that we was gettin' a tidy few shells round about. D'you reckon 'e'll get orl right, sir ? '

It was evident that the unemotional Scupham was consumed with anxiety.

"Oh ! he *must* !" cried Lorrison. "It would be too cruel if he didn't pull through after all he's done. He's a *man* if ever there was one."

"And that's a fact," said Scupham, preparing to follow his idol to the dressing station. As he moved away Lorrison heard him mutter,

"There ain't no one on Gawd's earth like old Pickers—fancy 'im rememberin' them there "spares." 'Strewh ! 'e *is* a one !" Which was a very high compliment indeed. . . .

Official correspondence, even when it is marked 'Pressing and Confidential' in red ink and enclosed in a sealed envelope, takes a considerable time to pass through the official channels and come back again. It was some days before the colonel commanding a certain divisional ammunition column received an answer to his report upon the inexplicable absence of his adjutant. He was a vindictive man who felt that he had been left in the lurch, and he had taken pains to draft a letter which would emphasise the shortcomings of his subordinate. The answer, when it did come, positively shocked him. It was as follows :

"With reference to your report upon the absence without leave of Second Lieutenant Pickersdyke, the Major-General Commanding directs me to say that as this officer was severely wounded on September 25 whilst commanding a section of the —th Battery R.F.A. with conspicuous courage and ability, for which he has been specially recommended for distinction by the G.O.C.R.A., and as he is now in hospital in England, no further action will be taken in the matter."

To be snubbed by the Staff because he had reported upon the scandalous conduct of a mere 'ranker' was not at all the colonel's idea of the fitness of things. His fury, which vented itself chiefly upon his office clerk, would have been greater still if he could have seen his late adjutant comfortably ensconced in a cosy ward in one of the largest houses of fashionable London, waited upon by ladies of title, and showing an admiring circle of relations the jagged piece of steel which a very famous surgeon had extracted from his shoulder free of charge!

For, in spite of his colonel, the progress of Pickersdyke on the chosen path of his ambition was now quite definitely assured.

JEFFERY E. JEFFERY.

BALLIOL MEMORIES.

A NOTE BY THE HON. A. E. GATHORNE-HARDY.

My article in the October number has brought me many kind letters from old Balliol friends for which I am grateful, and one or two errors have been called to my attention, which I should like to correct. Sir Courtenay Ilbert points out that I am mistaken in claiming the present Speaker as a member of Balliol College, 'he was of Trinity, Cambridge.'

Francis Le Marchant points out that 'Dick Webster,' the late Lord Alverstone, and not Lawes as stated, beat Jersey in the mile race in the first Inter-University Sports held at Cambridge; 'believe an eyewitness.' Sneyd Kynnersley contributes an amusing anecdote about the latter's trophies. Count Karolyi was admiring his display of racing cups, and noticing one in particular, asked what horse won it. 'Oh,' answered his host, 'I won that one myself in a three-mile race.' 'Do you mean to say, Lord Jersey,' said the Count, 'that you ran three miles without sitting down!'

I should like also to correct a careless error in my quotation of Tennyson's metrical compliment to Katherine Bradshaw. The first two lines should read:

Because she bore the iron name

Of him who doomed '*his*' King to die,

instead of, as printed, '*the*' King. I am sure the exquisite ear of the author would attach importance to the correction; he would never have allowed the cadence and stress to fall on such an insignificant word and sound as '*the*'.

ON BUYING AN INCOME.

By J. F. JUNKIN.

The majority of people do not know how to make the most of the capital at their disposal. It does not matter how the capital has been acquired—it may be the result of years of thrift or it may have come in the form of a legacy—its use is to provide an income. When a man or a woman employs that capital in such a way that it provides an income only half the amount it might earn, clearly the money is not being used to advantage. Yet I know many people continue to employ their capital at half its earning capacity, who would be horrified to get only half the value from any other purchase they made.

War conditions have made it increasingly essential to obtain the utmost value from every penny possessed. Not only must purchases at the shops be made with due regard to economy, but the earning power of the capital which produces the income must be closely examined. If it be earning anything less than its maximum there is good cause for readjustment of investment.

Men and women whose income consists of interest or dividend should make most careful inquiry about the great advantage of annuities. A comparatively small capital used to purchase an income (annuity) from the Sun Life of Canada will produce a really good income. What the amount will be depends, of course, on the age of the annuitant and the amount of money used for the purpose. A man of 55 can buy an income of £8 10s. 11d. for each £100 of his money, and this income is absolutely sure for life. And if he be aged 65 when making his purchase the income will be £11 10s. 8d. per £100.

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